

**GORGEOUS GARDENS: BE INSPIRED!**

# **YOUR GARDEN**

For people who love gardens

Autumn 2016

**BIG  
BULB  
OFFER  
PAGE 58**

## **BEAUTIFUL BULBS**

✓ CHOOSE  
✓ PLANT  
✓ NURTURE  
FOR THE  
BEST  
BLOOMS

## **GOOD, BETTER, BEST**

Quick fixes  
to improve  
any garden

## **FROM GARDEN TO TABLE**

JUICY APPLES  
& PEARS, PRIZE  
PUMPKINS AND  
SUPER SALADS

## **SMALL SPACE BIG IDEAS**

Unlock the potential  
of a little garden

# **Autumn MADE EASY**

**MUST-HAVE PLANTS  
FOR AMAZING COLOUR**





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# Garden Discoveries



## GARDENS OF SOUTH AFRICA

GARDENS, LANDSCAPES, WILDLIFE AND WINE  
with Genevieve Jacobs | 01–17 October 2016 (17 days)

Flanked by the Atlantic Ocean on the west and the Indian Ocean on the east, South Africa is rich in indigenous flora, exceptional gardens, stunning natural landscapes, amazing wildlife and vibrant, diverse cultures.

Image: Gardens at The Cellars-Hohenort



## PRIVATE GARDENS OF NEW ZEALAND

WELLINGTON TO QUEENSTOWN  
with Julie Kinney | 30 October – 12 November 2016 (14 days)

One of Julie's favourite destinations is New Zealand and she just can't wait to revisit and show off her specially chosen properties in the glorious Spring. Over two weeks, meet an eclectic mix of artisans and farmers, visit historic buildings and explore carefully selected private gardens.

Image: Paripuma. Photo Michal Wells



For detailed information visit [renaissancetours.com.au/garden-tours](http://renaissancetours.com.au/garden-tours), call 1300 727 095 or contact your travel agent.



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### A word from **the editor**

After the exhausting  
heat of summer,  
you'd be forgiven  
for needing a break,  
but there's no rest for  
the wonderful.

Autumn is one of  
the busiest times in  
the garden, with plenty of work to do  
cleaning up after spring and summer's  
bounty and laying the groundwork for the  
seasons to come. Deadheading, pruning  
and planting are made all the better for  
the cooler weather, and the promise of  
what all that hard work will reap once  
spring has sprung again for another year.

One job that's among the most exciting  
of the season is planning for and planting  
out spring-flowering bulbs. And to make  
it all the better, we've got a special bulb  
offer for you on page 58, so you can  
have even more gorgeous blooms in your  
garden. We've also got pretty planting  
ideas for those beautiful bulbs to make  
you the envy of all your neighbours.

But of course, we don't want the  
season to be all about hard work, so  
we've also put together a list of the  
best plants to grow for autumn colour,  
whether you've got  
a courtyard or acreage.

So, go on, get into it!

Steph

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## Subscribe and save

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**130** for more information



80



66



96



99



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# Connected with **YOUR** GARDEN

We love hearing what you've been up to in your garden



Prize letter



## FROM THE ASHES

On the left is our garden after it was destroyed by the 2013 bushfires, and on the right is the garden as it is today. The fire started at the back of our place and we lost neighbours either

side. In all, hundreds of houses were either lost or damaged in Winmalee. We were out of our house for seven months, but we're slowly getting back to some semblance of what it used to be.

Carol Clifford, via Facebook



Prize letter

## SUCK IT UP

When the stink bugs moved into our garden and made themselves at home in the four citrus trees in the front yard, I googled for some answers. We really wanted an eco-friendly solution rather than a chemical one. Lots of gardeners recommended various chemicals and home-made solutions, but the one that really took my fancy was to vacuum them off! So now we regularly Hoover our citrus trees, much to the amusement of our neighbours and drivers passing by. But it works, I can tell you. We can truthfully recommend this as an environmentally friendly bug-removal solution to other gardeners.

Linda Campbell, Parkwood, Qld



## BEARY FUNNY

I thought you might like to see my 'Teddy Bear' sunflowers.

Margaret McGrath, Miranda, NSW

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EMAIL us at [yg@pacificmags.com.au](mailto:yg@pacificmags.com.au) with your letters – we want to hear from you!



## f FACEBOOK FAVOURITE

We loved seeing your tomato harvests. Here are some of your tasty toms that you posted on our Facebook page



Joan Joachim



Carol Clifford



Backyard Garden Wonders

Autumn's three prize-letter writers each receive two pairs of special-edition Fiskars 365th birthday bypass pruners, worth \$59 each – one for themselves and one for a friend. The pruner has a titanium blade and special gearing for three times more power, so gardening has never been so easy!

Visit [fiskars.com.au](http://fiskars.com.au) For your chance to win a prize for your letter, email us at [yg@pacificmags.com.au](mailto:yg@pacificmags.com.au), leave a comment on Facebook, or write to *Your Garden*, Pacific Magazines, 8 Central Avenue, Eveleigh, NSW 2015.



**FISKARS**



## GOOD NEIGHBOURS

When my elderly parents complained about the miserable looking hedge separating their garden from their neighbours' front yard, we got together and decided to pull out the scraggy plants and do a communal long bed. As my parents and their neighbour get on very well, it became quite an exciting venture for them, and they are now each enjoying the view of one another's gardens and liked discussing what to plant in the new boundary bed. Daffodils, pansies and lavender mixed with native shrubs are all doing well. What better way to be neighbourly than chatting, planting and weeding together? Mum says she can really recommend this.

Victoria Mavros, Sale, Vic

## Show us your garden



Top: Pam Payten, Queanbeyan, NSW. Bottom left: Jackie Marsland, Berwick, Vic. Bottom right: Carol Boyd, Newnham, Tas.



To share your garden with us, simply upload a photo to [yg-gardens.com.au](http://yg-gardens.com.au) – we love seeing them!



# Autumn Calendar

Temperatures are dropping, but there are still masses of events happening in gardens around the country



## **April 2-3** St Erth Heritage Apple Festival, Vic

The Diggers Club is putting on a celebration of all things apple and pear. Taste test heritage varieties, snack on freshly baked apple pies, sip some cider and, of course, tour the gorgeous gardens of St Erth. Visit [diggers.com.au](http://diggers.com.au)

## **April 9-10**

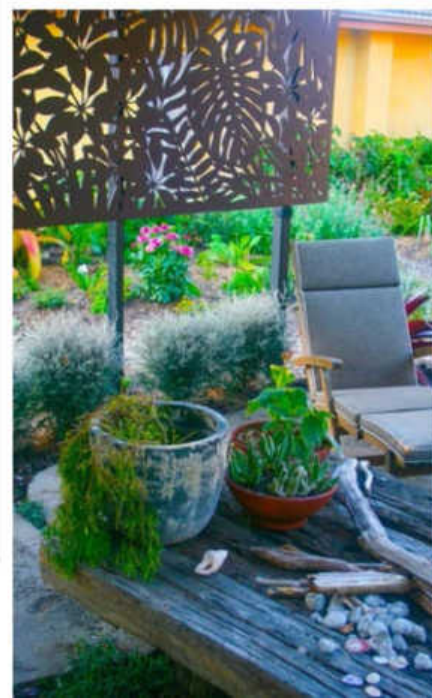
### **The Collectors' Plant Fair, NSW**

If you're after something a little out of the ordinary for your garden, this annual event could be perfect for you. More than 70 specialist nurseries gather to sell their wares in a paradise for plant nerds. Visit [collectorsplantfair.com](http://collectorsplantfair.com)

## **March 5**

### **Planty Fierce, NSW**

Head to the NSW Central Coast to visit four stunning coastal gardens open free to the public for the day. There will also be plants for sale so you can take home more than just inspiration. Visit [myopengarden.com.au](http://myopengarden.com.au)



GETTY IMAGES



## April 30-May 1

### Australian Plants Society (SA region) Native Plant Sale, SA

For a gold coin donation, you can take advantage of knowledgeable local growers and buy plants of local provenance, get expert advice, browse rare books and more. A list of available plants will be released online the week before the sale. Visit [australianplantssa.asn.au](http://australianplantssa.asn.au)



## April 16-17

### A Garden A-Fair, Qld

This annual plant fair is hosted by the Queensland Council of Garden Clubs and features plant and flower displays, local experts ready to answer all your garden questions, informative speakers and plant sales. Entry is \$3. Visit [www.qcgc.net](http://www.qcgc.net)

## May 22

### Annual Herb Awareness, Qld

The Queensland Herb Society knows how amazing herbs are, and they want you to know too. Buy plants and herbal products, and listen to experts to help you unlock the potential of some of these amazing plants. Visit [qldherbsociety.org.au](http://qldherbsociety.org.au)



## March 16-20

### Melbourne International Flower & Garden Show, Vic

MIFGS, the big kahuna of garden festivals, is turning 21, so the show is set to be even bigger and better this year. New to the event is Gardens by Twilight, giving people the chance to explore the gardens at night. Visit [melbflowershow.com.au](http://melbflowershow.com.au)

## April 9-10

### Garden RELEAF (national)

Visit your local independent garden centre this weekend to help raise money for BeyondBlue. You'll have the chance to win a \$4950 travel voucher, as well as getting gardening, getting healthy and having fun. Visit [gardenreleaf.com.au](http://gardenreleaf.com.au)

## May 7-8

### Festival of Country Gardens, WA

This popular spring festival now has an autumn version. For one weekend, you'll be able to visit a plethora of gorgeous gardens in south-west Western Australia not normally open to the public and really get your garden fix. Visit [countrygardens-australia.com](http://countrygardens-australia.com)



Boston ivy (*Parthenocissus tricuspidata*)

# A new leaf

Love autumn leaves? We've got the plants for you, no matter what size your garden is

WORDS ELIZABETH SWANE

**M**any a road trip has been planned with the purpose of seeing some spectacular autumn colour. And while you might not be able to squeeze an avenue of poplars down your own driveway, you can always add at least a touch of autumn colour to your garden.





Crepe myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica* x *L. fauriei* 'Sioux')



Eastern redbud (*Cercis canadensis* 'Forest Pansy')



Oak leaf hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia*)



## Courtyards and small gardens

**Boston ivy** (*Parthenocissus tricuspidata*) and **Virginia Creeper** (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*)

✓ **Fast cover, brilliant autumn hues**

To swathe walls, fences and pergolas with a blaze of autumn colour, Boston ivy and Virginia creeper are reliable, vigorous deciduous climbers. Boston ivy has tri-lobed leaves and climbs using sucker-like discs on tendrils, clinging to walls and surfaces. Virginia creeper has divided five-lobed leaves and climbs rapidly using tendrils and sucker-like discs. Both colour reliably in areas with mild winters, turning brilliant shades of red, yellow and purple.

**Rest of the year:** Lush dark green foliage, in cool zones.

**Best climate:** Cool to subtropical zones.

**Crepe myrtle** (*Lagerstroemia indica* x *L. fauriei* 'Sioux')

✓ **Autumn foliage, summer flowers and decorative bark**

Known for their showy trusses of summer flowers in pinks, white, mauve, crimson

and purple, these versatile trees also feature good, strong autumn colour. Varieties range from 3m tall and 2m wide, and one of the best is 'Sioux', with coppery brown to bright red autumn colouring. Likes a full-sun position, isn't fussy about soils, and is resistant to powdery mildew in humid conditions.

**Rest of the year:** Intense pink summer flowers and highly ornamental pinkish caramel bark patterning.

**Best climate:** Drought and heat tolerant, and tolerates a wide range of climatic conditions.

**Eastern redbud** (*Cercis canadensis* 'Forest Pansy')

✓ **Brilliant orange autumn foliage**

This colourful tree features heart-shaped reddish-purple leaves with sensational yellow and orange autumn contrast. It forms a low-branching, spreading canopy with distinct layered zigzag branches. Reaching 5m x 5m, 'Forest Pansy' can be trained as a single trunk

or a multi-stemmed tree. It prefers a sunny position in moist well-drained soil, with protection from strong winds. **Rest of the year:** Purple foliage, and masses of pretty, lilac pea flowers in early spring.

**Best climate:** All zones except tropics.

**Oak leaf hydrangea** (*Hydrangea quercifolia*)

✓ **Dramatic leaf colour in cool zones**

This plant's sculptural foliage colours to deep reds and bronze in autumn, remaining until mid-winter, especially in cooler zones. With a shrubby habit to 2m high x 2.5m wide, it's ideal for shady spots under trees. It's also tolerant of part sun and drier conditions. To prune, trim off spent flower heads in late autumn.

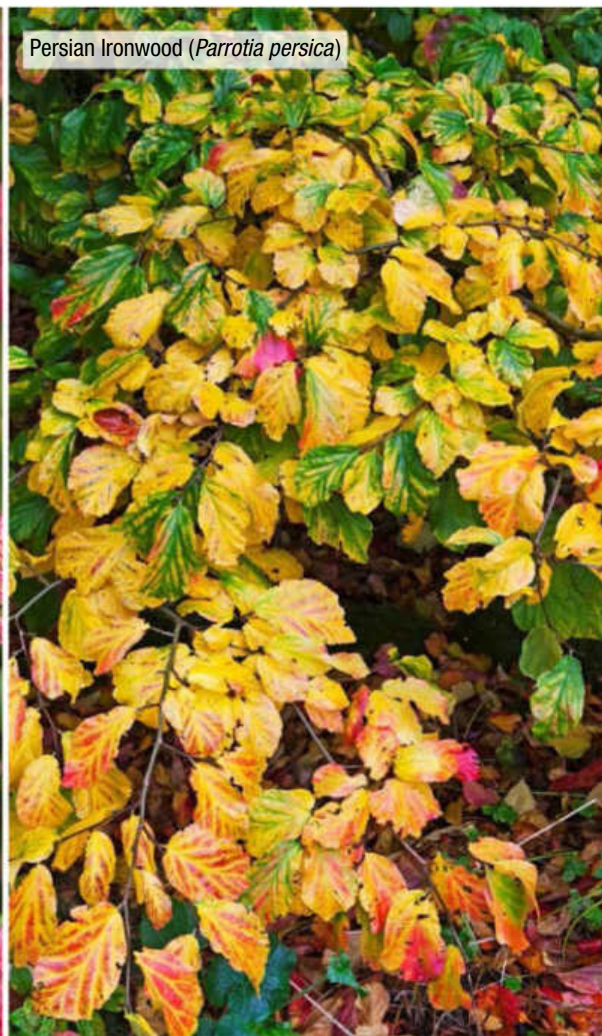
**Rest of the year:** Lush green foliage and conical heads of white flowers age soft pink to antique red in late summer.

**Best climate:** Best colour is in cool climates, but it grows well in all zones except the tropics. ►





Sedum autumn joy (*Sedum spectabile* 'Autumn Joy')



Persian Ironwood (*Parrotia persica*)



Chinese tallow tree (*Sapium sebiferum*)

## Suburban backyards

### Sedum autumn joy (*Sedum spectabile* 'Autumn Joy')

✓ **Top autumn perennial, long flowering**

This spreading, upright succulent produces masses of dusky pink summer flower heads that turn brick red, ageing to russet bronze in autumn. It combines well with grasses and most perennials in full sun to part-shade positions. Cut back to ground level in late winter.

**Rest of the year:** Grey-toothed foliage, striking black seed heads in winter.

**Best climate:** All except tropics.

### Persian ironwood (*Parrotia persica*)

✓ **Elegant, small spreading tree with vibrant and varied autumn colour**

This stately medium-sized tree is valued for its rich and reliable autumn colour. Excellent autumn hues include yellow, burgundy, orange and red, and it colours well, even in areas with mild winters.

Reaching 7m tall x 5m wide with lustrous foliage, it forms a rounded, often multi-stemmed, spreading tree. It prefers well-drained, slightly acid soils, and a full sun to partial shade position. Withstands dry conditions once established.

**Rest of the year:** Lustrous dark green foliage and ornamental white to light grey bark.

**Best climate:** Cool to subtropical zones.

### Chinese tallow tree (*Sapium sebiferum*)

✓ **Reliable autumn colour in warmer zones**

This deciduous tree grows to 10m tall and 7m wide, with a dense, many-branched crown. Even in moderate winters, the heart-shaped leaves colour brilliant scarlet, crimson, purple, orange and yellow. *Sapium* is a tough and adaptable tree that responds well to pruning to shape or reduce size, and is drought resistant once established.

**Rest of the year:** Lush, green heart-shaped leaves, rounded seed capsules with white, waxy seeds in late summer.

**Best climate:** Cool to subtropical zones.

### Maiden grass (*Miscanthus sinensis* 'Gracillimus')

✓ **Wonderful straw-coloured autumn and winter foliage**

This large arching grass adds texture and movement as the fine foliage rustles in the breeze. Changing from green to a beautiful russet-straw colour in autumn and winter, it's a great background plant or filler for borders. Use singly or in clumps for visual impact. Reaching 1.8m high by 1.5m wide, it likes a sunny spot with added organics to retain soil moisture, although is quite drought tolerant once established. Cut back hard to ground level in late winter.

**Rest of the year:** Bright green spring and summer foliage, and purple flower plumes in late summer.


**Best climate:** Cool to subtropical zones. ►



Maiden grass (*Miscanthus sinensis* 'Gracillimus')







China rose or Butterfly rose (*Rosa* 'Mutabilis')



### ***Your Garden tips for great autumn colour***

- In cool climates, autumn colours are reliable and more intense.
- In warmer zones with mild winters, select varieties known to colour well.
- Try to view and purchase trees in autumn when you can see their colour.
- Good spring rainfall and a cool, dry autumn produce the best foliage colour.
- For best autumn colour, plant your trees in a sunny position.



Maidenhair tree  
(*Ginkgo biloba*)



October Glory maple (*Acer rubrum* 'October Glory')



Tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*)



## Space lovers

### China rose or Butterfly rose (*Rosa* 'Mutabilis')

#### ✓ Myriad changeable flowers

Pointed red buds open to single coppery-yellow flowers that turn orange, pink and finally crimson. With successive flushes of silky blooms, it's rarely without a flower from November to April, with flower colour intensifying in autumn. This easy-care shrub rose grows 2m high and wide and features contrasting dark plum-coloured stems. Suits informal hedging or combined with evergreen shrubs in a sunny position. Prune in winter, removing about a third of overall growth. Feed with controlled-release rose fertiliser.

**Rest of the year:** Crimson-tinged new foliage ages to deep green.

**Best climate:** All except tropics.

### Maidenhair tree (*Ginkgo biloba*)

#### ✓ Spectacular yellow autumn foliage

Ginkgo is a highly attractive ancient 'living fossil' tree from China. Elegant maidenhair fern-like foliage is buttery yellow throughout the year, turning

rich golden-yellow in autumn. The tree has a strong branching pattern and open habit, growing slowly to 12m tall and 5m wide. Ginkgo prefers a full-sun position, and is able to withstand a wide range of adverse conditions including pollution. Water when young – once established will stand dry, compacted soils.

**Rest of the year:** Yellow foliage and a beautiful silhouette of bare winter branches.

**Best climate:** Cool to temperate zones.

### October Glory maple (*Acer rubrum* 'October Glory')

#### ✓ Exceptional, reliable autumn colour

Uniform, upright conical growth habit with neat, regular branching makes this a superb specimen tree reaching 12m x 9m in 20 years. Superb late-autumn foliage begins as dark pinkish-red, turns to brilliant red-orange and lipstick red. Adaptable to a wide range of climate and soil conditions, including damp soils and drought, once established. Best colour in full sun with adequate soil moisture.

**Rest of the year:** Lustrous green five-lobed leaves, excellent leafy shade tree.

**Best climate:** More intense in cooler zones, reliable colour in most areas except tropics.

### Tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*)

#### ✓ Spectacular specimen tree, fiery autumn display

This 15m tree has an attractive horizontal branching habit, most evident in autumn and winter. Renowned for its spectacular autumn display of vivid reds, scarlet, crimson, orange and yellow, it copes well with boggy soils, so suits poorly drained sites. Suits well-drained acid soils, ample summer water and full sun to partially shaded position. Seedling-grown trees have variable autumn colour and habit, so select young trees in autumn. *Nyssa* 'Forum' is a selected form, with a symmetrical habit to 10m x 5m and consistently excellent autumn colour.

**Rest of the year:** Dark green glossy leaves – a wonderful leafy shade tree.

**Best climate:** Cool to temperate zones. ■



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# Gardens

These four stunning gardens are full of inspiring ideas for you to use at home



**22** *Artistic vision*



**30** *Peaceful paradise*



**38** *Back to the future*



**46** *A use for everything*





The walled house terrace at Mawarra – a classic example of Edna Walling's use of stone.



# *Vision splendid*

Edna Walling considered Mawarra one of her finest gardens

WORDS SUSAN CHANCE PHOTOS CLAIRE TAKACS

**T**ravel just 45km east from Melbourne to Sherbrooke in the Dandenong Ranges and you'll find Mawarra, considered to be one of landscape designer Edna Walling's finest gardens. Originally named The Grove when the garden was built in 1932, Mawarra is a classic, relatively intact example of her work.

"A symphony in steps and beautiful trees... that would weather into greater beauty as the years went on," is how Edna described the garden.

Most would agree this is an apt characterisation of Mawarra today, more than 80 years on, with its formal, geometric framework, its terraces, curved stone walls, sweeping central stairway, pools and majestic trees. ►





The formal Italianate stone-flagged terrace with birdbath, and clipped boxus.



Old rose



In front of the Arts and Crafts-style house are silver birch and weeping and standard maples.

## Restoration

Horticulturalist and stonemason John Champion is currently custodian of this heritage garden and intends to restore it to its original splendour.

The handsome stone walls of locally quarried stone, constructed by Edna's preferred contractor, Eric Hammond, are being repaired. As John points out, they are in need of repair thanks to the rambling but destructive seaside daisy (*Erigeron glaucus*), a favourite of Edna's, planted to soften the harsh look of the stone.

John also liaises with Andrew Laidlaw, consultant to the Royal Melbourne Botanic Gardens, and plantsman Don Tease about new selections for Mawarra, as the tree canopy now affects much of the early planting.

## Early influences

British-born Edna Walling (1895-1973), who attended Burnley's School of Horticulture in Victoria, is credited with being one of Australia's most influential 20th-century landscape designers. She was also a renowned photographer and author, publishing several successful gardening books. ►



## Gardens Art house

The original timber gateway, relocated to the side of the cottage, is flanked by a pair of conifers.







Weeping cherry and a deciduous climber provide strong autumn colour next to the buxus.





One of a pair of purple beech (*Fagus sylvatica* f. *purpurea*) at the top of the grand central stairway.

Inspired by the formal gardens of the Italian Renaissance and the Arts and Crafts style of British architect Sir Edwin Lutyens and garden designer Gertrude Jekyll, Edna created gardens that reflected her true understanding of space and proportion.

### The original plan

The design of Mawarra illustrates this, with its significant architectural features, such as stone walls, stairs, parterres and pools. Edna's beautifully detailed watercolour drawings clearly outline these formal design elements.

The Arts and Crafts-style house, designed in the mid-1920s, provided the axis for the garden – the central stairway running down from the house terrace with five parallel terraces leading off it.

Taking advantage of the sloping site, Edna's pièce de résistance is the pair of broad steps running symmetrically from the house terrace. Skirted by low stone walls, these ramp-like steps lead down to what is the major focal point of the garden, the grand central stairway – at its base a beautiful octagonal reflecting pool.

"Effortlessly, one reaches the house terrace hardly aware of having ascended some 40 or 50 steps," wrote Edna. "An

arboretum of exotic trees on either side of the stairway is lovely in the autumn when the foliage of these trees turns red, yellow and gold."

### The walks

Such is the magic of this garden. Several paths run from the central stairway, taking the visitor on a voyage of discovery.

In true secret-garden style, these pathways, such as The Azalea Walk, The Reclining Boy Walk and The Birch Walk, all lead to surprising and secluded vistas.

One takes you to a hidden cottage, supposedly based on a playhouse built for the Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret at Royal Lodge in Windsor.

### The planting

When Edna first took on the commission for the 1.4 hectare site, there were already many established mountain ash (*Eucalyptus regnans*). She had in mind a woodland effect for Mawarra, planting a diverse variety of trees and shrubs, including maples, oaks, beeches, magnolias, silver birches and dogwoods.

"Around 70 per cent of the garden is original planting," says John. "We have one of the best collections of viburnum [one of Edna's signature plants] I know." ►



Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum* 'Dissectum')





A more recent addition, the miniature village, is adjacent to the playhouse cottage.

The outstanding pair of purple beech (*Fagus sylvatica* f. *purpurea*) at the foot of the steps contributes to the formal structure, as does the dense planting of trees and shrubs on either side of the steps and paths throughout the garden.

A grassy path leads to silver birches underplanted with bluebells that contrast with the border garden on another terrace, once sunny enough for herbaceous perennials, now shaded by mature trees and home to azaleas and camellias.

### Signature plants

Mawarra features many of Edna's signature plants, including viburnum, philadelphus, spiraea, berberis, cotoneaster, mahonia, corylus, camellia, aucuba, amelanchier, malus, rhododendron and hydrangea.

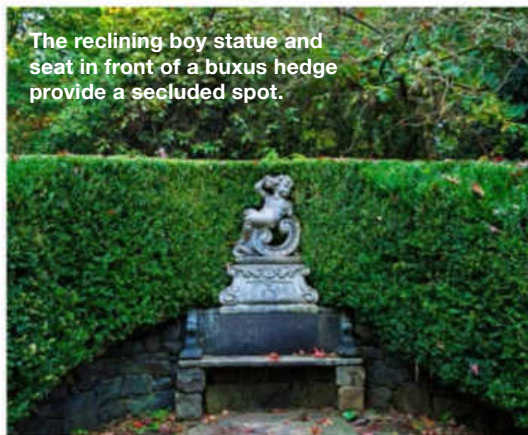
### The climate

John believes Mawarra has its own eco-climate, the autumn leaf colours being about a month behind others in the region. The soil is rich and fertile he says, due to 80 years of leaf matter. Along with the high rainfall, it's allowed Edna's "woodland" trees to grow to spectacular maturity. ■

● For more information, visit [edna-walling-experience.com](http://edna-walling-experience.com)



The pathway is planted with maples and rhododendrons.



The reclining boy statue and seat in front of a boxwood hedge provide a secluded spot.




Japanese anemone





The octagonal reflective pool surrounded by dogwoods, maples, azaleas and rhododendrons.





An oasis of calm – Balinese stone statues stand in the water feature surrounded by, clockwise from top left, hibiscus, tiger grass (*Thysanolaena maxima*), giant taro (*Alocasia macrorrhizos*), and stripey white liriopes (*Ophiopogon intermedius*).

# Bali Hai

The peaceful paradise of Bali inspired a Queensland couple to build their dream garden

WORDS SUSAN CHANCE PHOTOS ANASTASIA KARIOFYLLIDIS









The Balinese pavilion cleverly hides storage for the water features on either side. Foxtail palms (*Wodyetia bifurcata*) and northern Queensland Alexander palms (*Archontophoenix alexandrae*) sit among the eucalypts.



Fern, canna lily and prostrate purple wattle (*Acacia purpurea*)



Triple hibiscus (*Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*)

**T**here's something very special about a Balinese garden. It's hard to pinpoint exactly what it is – the abundance of lush, green foliage, stunning tropical plants and stone statuary, or the atmosphere of peace and tranquillity that so many holidaymakers want to bring home. It's what Michael Miley and his late wife, Robyn, set out to achieve more than 10 years ago, when they carved a verdant tropical oasis out of the rugged Maroochy River landscape.

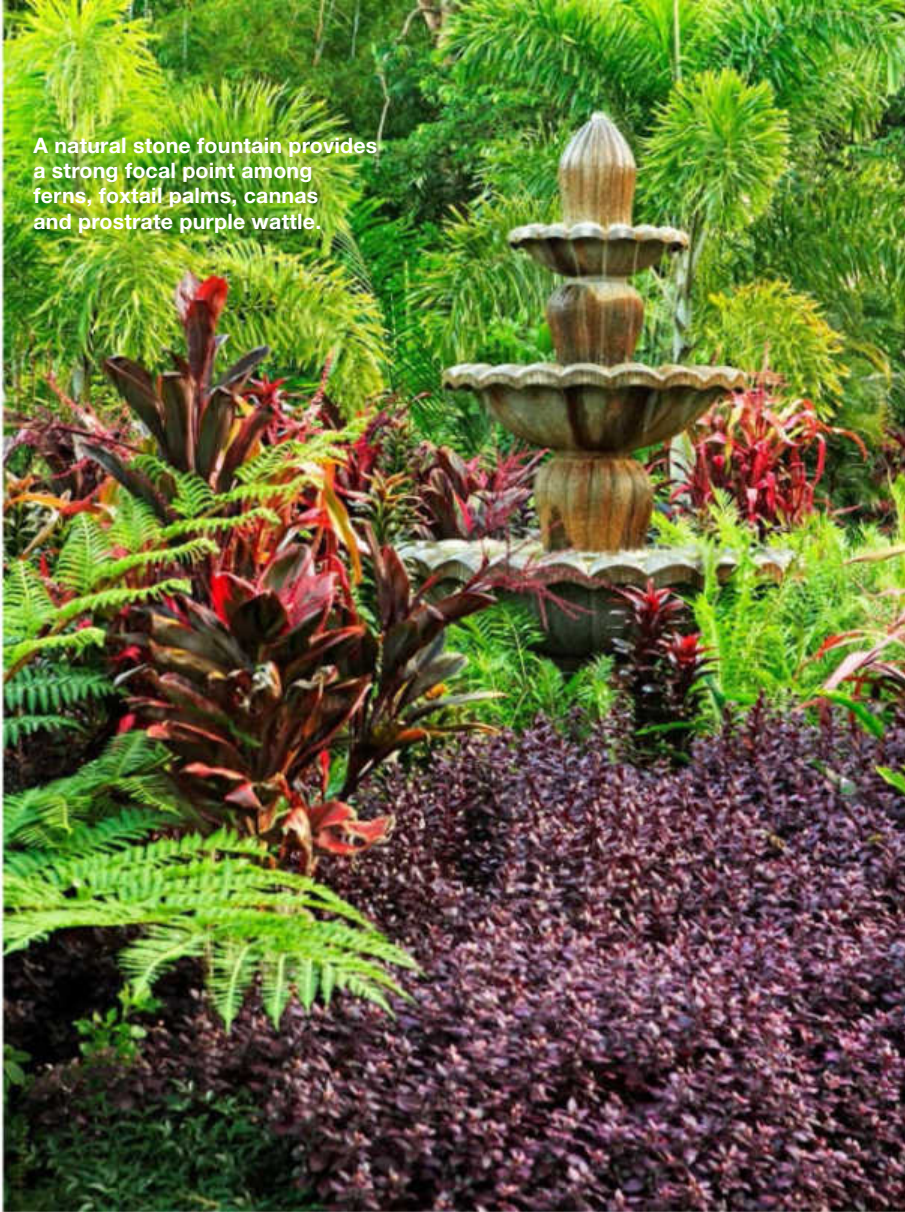
"The climate lent itself to this style of garden," explains Michael. "But the weather is changing, and so I'm changing the garden to suit these weather patterns."

"The climate is mainly dry now, with just the odd storm, so it's hard to keep



## Gardens Tropical oasis

A natural stone fountain provides a strong focal point among ferns, foxtail palms, cannas and prostrate purple wattle.



some plants alive. I'm constantly adapting the garden, introducing new plants and quite a lot of fruit trees. It's a work in progress."

### The backstory

It wasn't the gardens that first lured Michael and Robyn to the Indonesian wonderland of Bali; it was the Balinese sculptures, artefacts and furniture that Michael had dealt with in his Brisbane business. These artefacts alone inspired the couple to holiday on the island. And there began their dream.

### The site

In October 2002, Michael and Robyn viewed a 1.7-hectare property at Bli Bli on the Sunshine Coast. This weed-infested plot, fringed by saltwater mangroves and bordered by the Maroochy River won their hearts. They bought it at first sight.

### The planning

The couple began work on the acreage while still living in Brisbane, first choosing a site on the property for their house and painstakingly clearing the middle section of the acreage of dense weeds and lantana.

An entry road was constructed, and a temporary home they fondly called The Shed was built. Michael and Robyn stayed in the shed and commuted to their business in Brisbane while work got underway on the gardens and the main house. ►

A secluded sitting area of Balinese carved seats, edged with pots of golden cane palms (*Dypsis lutescens*).



Bronze birds are dotted around the gardens at Bali Hai.





First, former railway sleepers were brought in to build a retaining wall on the high side of the shed, and stone and boulders quarried from Cooloom were used to form a sizable wall on the lower side, incorporating a new dam.

Down by the river, land levels were raised in order to combat the salt when the river flooded. Construction commenced on raised boardwalks and fences, and several small, secluded areas were created throughout the grounds.

### The planting

At the same time, mass plantings began using hundreds of cuttings that Michael and Robyn had propagated themselves.

Michael explains that if something didn't grow, they put in something else. It was as simple as that. Everything seemed to come together, he says, as they learnt by trial and error what to plant. Propagation continues today, with prunings being taken and put back into the garden every year.

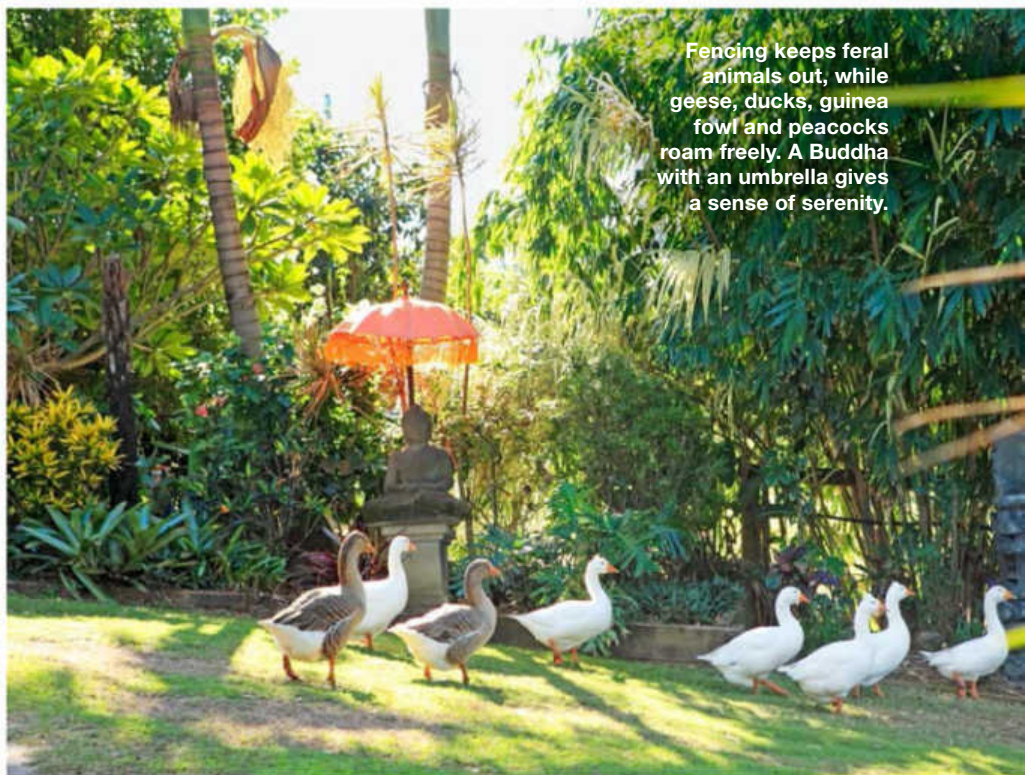
Native eucalypts, casuarinas, box and wattle trees were left untouched to blend with the exotic palms and bamboo, and provide some much-needed shade.

Highlighted by the use of frangipani, gingers, palms and macadamia trees, colour is an important element in this garden. Bromeliads, heliconias and hibiscus grow well, with bromeliads, for example, happily needing little maintenance in the hot, dry climate.

A place to relax and reflect. The furniture, textiles, light fittings and decorative objects are all imported from Bali – as is the pavilion itself.



Colourful foliage is a must.



Fencing keeps feral animals out, while geese, ducks, guinea fowl and peacocks roam freely. A Buddha with an umbrella gives a sense of serenity.





Wide beds brimming with bromeliads, agapanthus, gingers, palms and ferns provide colour as a strong contrast to the lush, green lawn. Retaining walls are of locally quarried stone.

### The soil

Soil is brought in regularly to top up the gardens as it quickly breaks down, according to Michael. But, he adds, he doesn't need to use much fertiliser, preferring simple sugar-cane mulch.

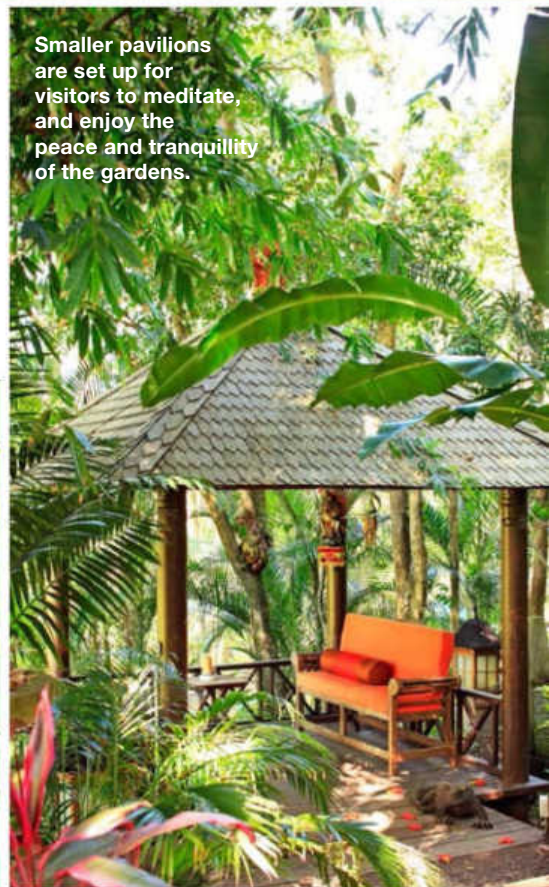
### Bali direct

The couple was fond of the star attractions of the Balinese sculptures and pavilions dotted around the gardens. ►

“A restful Balinese pavilion overlooks a pond where waterlilies thrive and, during a still night, the reflection of the moon dances on the water”

Smaller pavilions are set up for visitors to meditate, and enjoy the peace and tranquillity of the gardens.

*Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*





## Gardens Tropical oasis



It's the combination of Balinese-style planting with native eucalypts that gives Bali Hai its unique appeal.

Stone water features in various ponds, stone statues and bronze birds add authenticity and intrigue.

Three spirit houses, fully imported from Bali, provide places to reflect, contemplate and enjoy the peace of the garden. Meanwhile, peacocks and guinea fowl strut around, giving the air of a sanctuary.

The main house is totally Balinese-inspired, says Michael. It incorporates traditional details, and has only Balinese furniture and artefacts.

### Climate change

As he witnesses change in the climate, Michael admits he needs to adapt his ideas and plantings. "Palms are struggling in the hot, dry weather as palm fronds are shed. Foxtail palms are holding better in Bli Bli than Alexanders or golden canes."

Turning to fruit trees, he's found bananas, avocados, mangoes, lychees, star fruit, pineapples and coffee thrive, while lemon and lime trees and chillies offer enough bounty to share with neighbours.

### Keeping it nice

Michael clearly is passionate about Bali Hai, and works on it most days, he says, with a friend coming to help once a week. A bore provides water, and when he's away, "good mates water the garden for me".

He shares his garden, too, opening it at various time of the year, as well as generously allowing charities and a local hospice to have functions there. ■



One of three spirit houses in secluded areas of the garden. They add colour and charm, with ornate roof tiles and hand-carved wooden features.



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The wisteria-covered bakehouse is home to a woodshed and free-range chooks. When the Wilsons uncovered the cobblestone yard, they also discovered an old, original well.





# Old and new

This sprawling Tasmanian garden has been almost 200 years in the making

WORDS HILARY BURDEN PHOTOS CLAIRE TAKACS

**D**uring the driest spring and one of the driest summers on record, bushfires lapped at the edge of the valley in Mole Creek, northern Tasmania. Now Deborah and Scott Wilson are relieved autumn has finally arrived at Old Wesleydale, their 97-hectare property and heritage accommodation with roots that go back to 1829.

The approach to the late-Georgian homestead is via a long driveway and structured farm complex. The colour of established liquidambar trees and silver birch greets you on arrival, closely followed by a flurry of Light Sussex chooks fossicking over cobblestones in the old bakehouse-turned-woodshed. It feels as if you've travelled back in time, ►

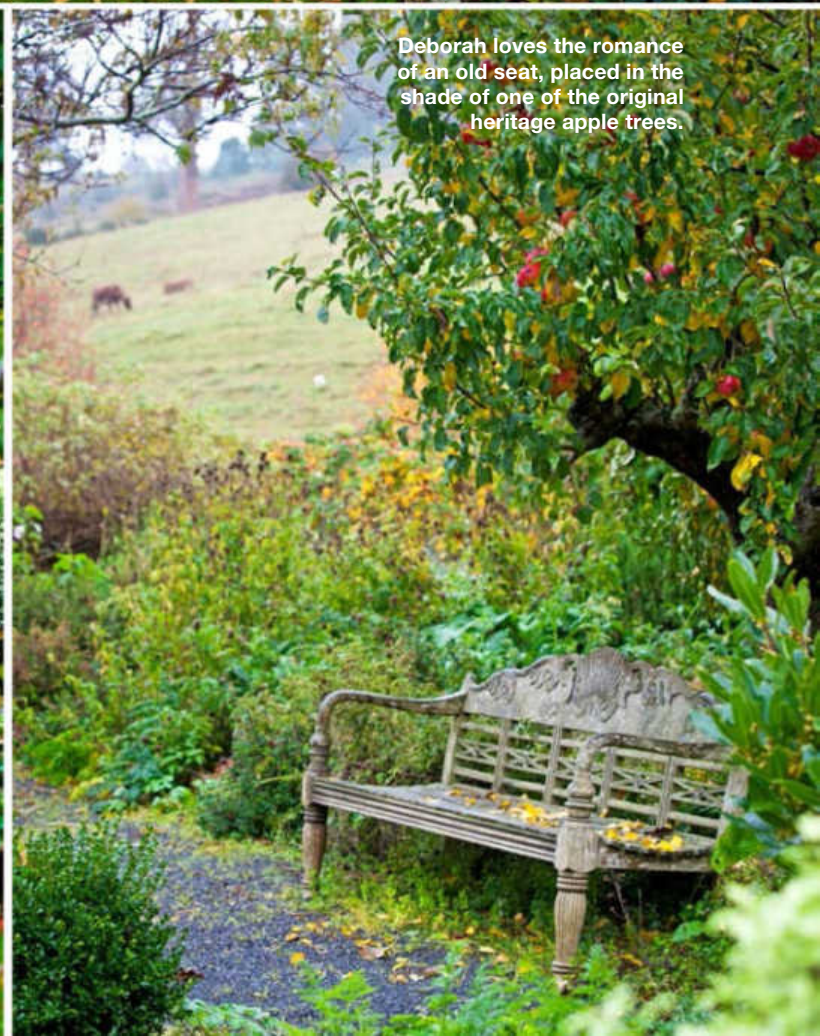




The Wilsons have watched their silver birch grove, planted in a wet spot in the horse paddock, grow from \$3.50 whips to an established woodland garden.



A view of the cottage accommodation, framed by an old pear tree and a row of hydrangeas dating back to the 1960s.



Deborah loves the romance of an old seat, placed in the shade of one of the original heritage apple trees.



The owners inherited four heritage apple trees from the old orchard, and added stepover and espaliered 1830 apples from Woodbridge Fruit Tree nursery.



## Gardens Time lapse



Low English box and taller pittosporum hedges frame a Folko Kooper sculpture of a heron created out of an old tortured willow.

visiting one of the early settlements of Australia, when properties were built to keep out the unknown and unwanted, while preserving self-sufficient English-style elegance within.

In fact, Old Wesleydale, is a compound made from fortified stone, built to keep stock in at night, and bushrangers and the Tasmanian tiger out.

"They were petrified of everything back then," says Deborah. "But we love it here now. We always wanted to live in a cottage and have an English country garden. We've kind of got our wish but without having to go to England."

Deborah, originally a teacher, and Scott, an agricultural assistant for a local school, moved here from Coolah, NSW, in 2001. Back then, the garden was a haphazard planting of hellebores, a few leggy roses and hydrangeas, while the Georgian property itself was "a bit run-down". The aspect, looking out over a valley to the Great Western Tiers, inspired them to create their dream English country garden that could also embrace the awe-inspiring vistas and magnificent skies beyond.

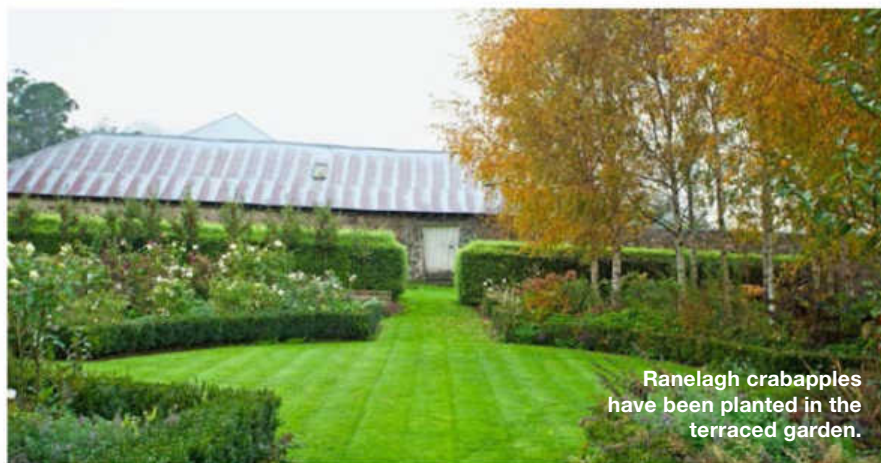
After setting up their business, breeding macaw parrots, they focused on restoring the property and building a garden out of rough horse paddocks.

"The garden just started with a walkway to the aviaries so we could keep our feet dry," explains Deborah. "Everything has come off that path, and even though it's been quite unplanned, it's worked really well." Scott has mastered many traditional gardening techniques (he is a master topiarist, hedge layer and dry-stone wall builder) and is now sharing them with others through courses he holds in the garden.

"We had no gardening background at all," explains Deborah. "We read a lot of gardening books and magazines. And

we've visited England a couple of times. One of our favourite gardens is the Sissinghurst Castle Garden in Kent, England, and we've taken a lot of inspiration from that. We like a feeling of whimsy and looseness."

It is remarkable to see what they've achieved, says local gardener, gardening writer/editor and frequent visitor to the property, Jennifer Stackhouse. "They're very talented gardeners. The walled garden is filled with delphiniums, columbines and other flowers from spring to autumn – it's a magical experience, like stepping into ►



Ranelagh crabapples have been planted in the terraced garden.





Deborah and Scott created a new walled garden from non-raked common bricks. The border, replanted every year, is part of the picking garden.



## Gardens Time lapse

a children's story book. The garden is such an inspiration to others. A visit to Old Wesleydale sends you back to your own garden recharged."

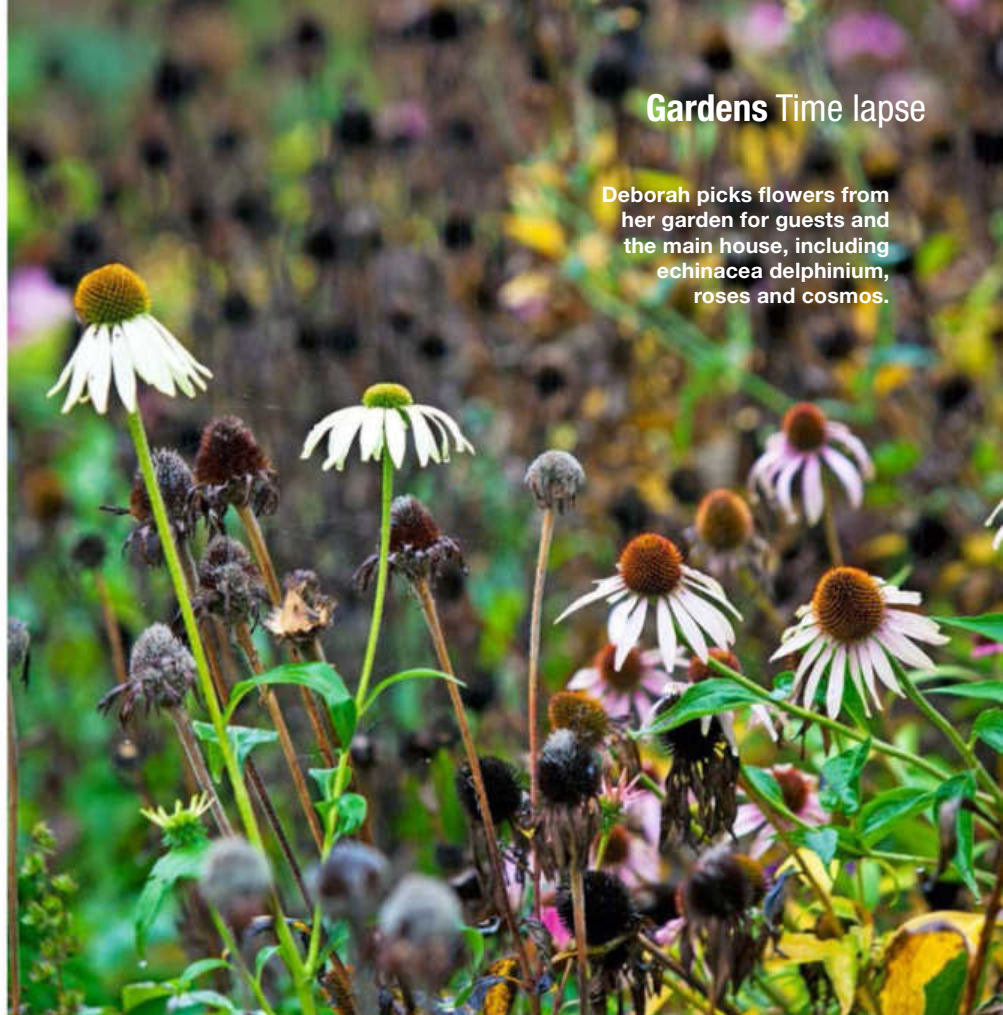
Internal gardens abound with hedges and walls, a productive potager, picking garden, English glasshouse, conservatory, potting shed, vegetable garden, and a towered chook house that Scott has built in the style of a dovecote.

A neighbour, an Englishman from Shropshire, taught Scott how to lay the extensive hawthorn hedging that reflects the farming heritage of the region. A topiary hedge made to look like a conga line of elephants is a striking feature, the *Lonicera nitida* clipped regularly by Scott is forever changing. A stone pathway leads to a lake where birdlife is plentiful and platypuses may be spotted at dusk.

In spring, the garden is blessed with colour and vibrancy, where self-seeding lupins, foxgloves, hollyhocks, echinacea and delphinium abound. Next spring, a new white garden will be well on the way, inspired by one of the couple's visits to Sissinghurst.

"Our garden is always changing," says Deborah. "We love how every year it looks different." ►

Deborah picks flowers from her garden for guests and the main house, including echinacea delphinium, roses and cosmos.



The rear of the main house dates back to 1829, along with an ancient apple tree.





The main picking garden and greenhouse, with views across the lake and the Great Western Tiers.



Black hollyhock



A Japanese elm awaits its autumn colour.

Cool-climate plants that grow better in Tasmania than other parts of Australia feature here, but with the dry, it's been a difficult season.

"We're very lucky with our water supply, we can keep the yard reasonably green," says Deborah. "But everything's been under a bit of stress – watering is never the same as rain."

Relaxing and comfortable self-contained accommodation is provided in the restored old buttery, and guests can wander freely through the unique farm complex with romantic barns and outbuildings, and soak up the atmosphere of days gone by.

"It's a garden that people can create themselves," says Deborah. "People come in and get lots of ideas. We're still learning as well. We've always loved the history of things, and this is a place with a story."

Deborah, who does most of the day-to-day gardening, returns to her day, watering the pots, feeding the birds, choosing fresh flowers from her picking garden for the house vases, cleaning the old buttery for their next guests, then rewarding herself by sitting down with a good gardening magazine. ■





A tightly clipped *Lonicera nitida* hedge resembles a herd of elephants travelling trunk to tail.





The combination of new – the plastic deer head – and the old, classic stone bust injects wonderful character to the garden.

WORDS: GAP PHOTOS: HANNEKE REUBROEK



# A garden *revolution*

Seeing a second use for old items is one thing – using them to create a beautiful and vibrant garden is another. Here we reveal some savvy, stylish reclamation ideas

**W**hen friends tell you they've been upcycling in their garden, divulging that they've been rummaging in skips, going to junk shops and generally tapping into their creative inner self, you could be forgiven for drawing a short breath. But forget CDs dangling garishly ►







The beautiful brickwork was exposed when plastered walls were removed, while the surprise gift of triangular cloches provide a sanctuary for year-round herbs.

in the breeze, or plastic bottles and bags being dotted hither and thither in the name of crop protection – this method of gardening can be beautiful. Ignore thrifty and think stylish. Ditch grunge and grab sleek, bespoke, crafted items that will enhance your outdoor space and stamp your own unique style on the garden.

### Effortless design

This garden oozes elegant urbanity, yet it uses numerous materials that have a past life. The building itself – an old commercial garage – has been converted into a graphic design studio, part-home part-workspace. Light and airy, the large double doors remain and open to reveal an impressive, atrium-like workshop. Outside is equally spacious, doubling as a meeting place for clients as well as a family garden. The tall walls create a sheltered area where grapes, lemons and olives can mature, and people can retreat from the urban buzz that's just a stone's throw away. The design follows strong lines and repeat plantings, so the overall atmosphere



*Fragaria vesca*, wild strawberry, brings colour to a garden shed made from an old cupboard.





feels smart and sophisticated. The fact that the plot is packed with upcycled items seems almost secondary – and that's the secret to its success.

### Clever creativity

Carefully craft and position a recycled item in your garden and it will appear as if it's been there forever, rather than hitting you in the face with a visual clash. That aged, softened look is definitely an advantage. Everywhere you look, this garden has ideas to borrow – beautiful canteen-like benches and tables, regimental raised beds packed with edibles, a feature firewood wall. The old garage offered up a wealth of timber when it was converted, and the owners made full use of its differing dimensions, hues and strengths. Sizeable support beams, rotting at one end, were too short to recycle internally, hence the birth of eight raised beds in the middle of the plot. Due to the atrium-style roof, excess tiles were crushed and added to the beds as an invaluable drainage layer so that Mediterranean herbs, such as basil, thyme, lavender and rosemary, would thrive. Lavenders, dahlias and blue-green *Festuca glauca* were planted in blocks,

offering pleasing symmetry to the plot. A measurement mistake by a glazer gifted sleek triangular cloches, giving the owners year-round supplies of leafy herbs and salads. This produce is consumed on a sturdy, slab-like table and bench, again made from support beams and lashed together with unimposing ironwork.

Terraces of herringbone and block paving have been left in place from the old building's footprint and a wall, previously plastered, was attacked with a kango to reveal beautiful brickwork beneath (this now forms the backdrop to timber-outlined goalposts). Again, using the aged materials to best effect, fencing panels were crafted using sun-bleached floorboards – there's no waiting when you upcycle.

### Garden development

This plot now only hints at its humble beginnings, and was inherited as an overgrown tangle of weeds and scrub. The initial clearance was functional, the plot mainly being used as a storage site for the vast quantities of timber that the garage relinquished. Noting that the soil was poor, the top one metre was removed and replaced with more fertile



The industrial-style outdoor lamps make a striking combination with the exposed brickwork.



Yuccas, wild strawberries and chives seem made for each other.



A Japanese umbrella sits atop the recycled wooden boards of the table.



## Gardens Freecycling

material. Locally sourced nut and apple trees, along with currants and cane fruits, were rescued from nearby housing developments. They fare well in the temperate climate (which can peak at 30°C in the summer and dip to -10°C during winter) alongside ornamental hydrangeas, hostas, roses and heucheras. A suntrap corner has a more tropical feel, with tough yet lush-looking cordylines, grasses and agaves being topped by a red parasol. The black chairs beneath the umbrella were disused remnants from a design show, deemed by the organisers as too inexpensive for the owners to display. Thank goodness they had the foresight – and taste – to keep them for their new life today, which pretty much encapsulates the success of the plot.

### Upcycling ideas to steal

- This look is all about linking the old with the new – the imposing garage doors and aged flooring areas firmly connect the reclaimed materials with their setting.
- If you haven't got a large restoration project at your fingertips for materials, go online to trawl freecycle sites, and speak to local architects for tip-offs of intended development locations where larger items may be scrapped.
- Inject character and personality with carefully placed statues and artwork – these owners have partnered a plastic deer head with a classic bust. A word of warning: overdoing it can dilute this effect.
- Large items help cement this style. A simple wooden cupboard, originally purchased overseas 20 years ago, has been transformed with a roof of metal sheetwork.
- Commercial materials add an industrial, urban theme. Here, old metal lamps from the garage provide illumination for a feature brick wall. ■



A moveable treat – the pink orchid can be positioned to gain maximum impact with the pink paper lanterns.



The garden owners upcycled their bench from wooden floorboards and iron.



Rotten support beams were reinvented to become sizeable garden beds. Too easy!





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# Bulb bounty

Spring is all about bulbs – tulips, daffodils, crocus and everything in-between – which means now is your time to plan and shop for the upcoming season

**P**lanting bulbs in autumn is the easiest way to guarantee you get a glorious display of flowers next spring. The growers have done all the hard work for you, fattening the bulbs to ensure they contain a plump, preformed flower bud. Inside, a bulb is made up of layers that are the swollen bases of this spring's leaves, packed with energy-rich sugar to fuel growth in spring. At the centre is the embryo flower bud, ready to emerge when conditions are right. After a period of winter cold, the bulb will rocket into growth in spring. All you need do is plant it.





## Plants Powerful beauty



### Buying tips for bulbs

✓ Buy bulbs early, as the longer they sit around in the shops, the more they dry out. Reject any that appear light and dehydrated.

✓ Before you buy, examine bulbs carefully to ensure they're healthy. Squeeze gently to check they're firm. Also, avoid any with white mould on the surface.

✓ If you're shopping in store, look for bigger bulbs as these produce more flowers. A good circumference size for a tulip is 12cm, *Allium hollandicum* 10-12cm and large narcissi 14-16cm. Hyacinths can be

up to 19cm, but about 15cm is ideal, and will be more economical to buy.

✓ Check the flattened base of each bulb to ensure it's healthy and undamaged, as this is where the roots emerge from.

✓ You may find bulbs, particularly narcissi, with two growing points or 'noses', which look like two bulbs joined at the base. If both sides are fat, then it is likely both will flower. If one side is thin and less developed, it's likely this will only produce leaves.

● Turn to page 58 for great offers on spring bulbs.

### What's in a bulb?

1

2

3

4



1 Nose of the bulb, from which leaves emerge

2 Swollen leaf bases making up layers

3 Preformed flower bud at centre

4 Base of the bulb, from which the roots grow ►



## How deep to plant your bulbs

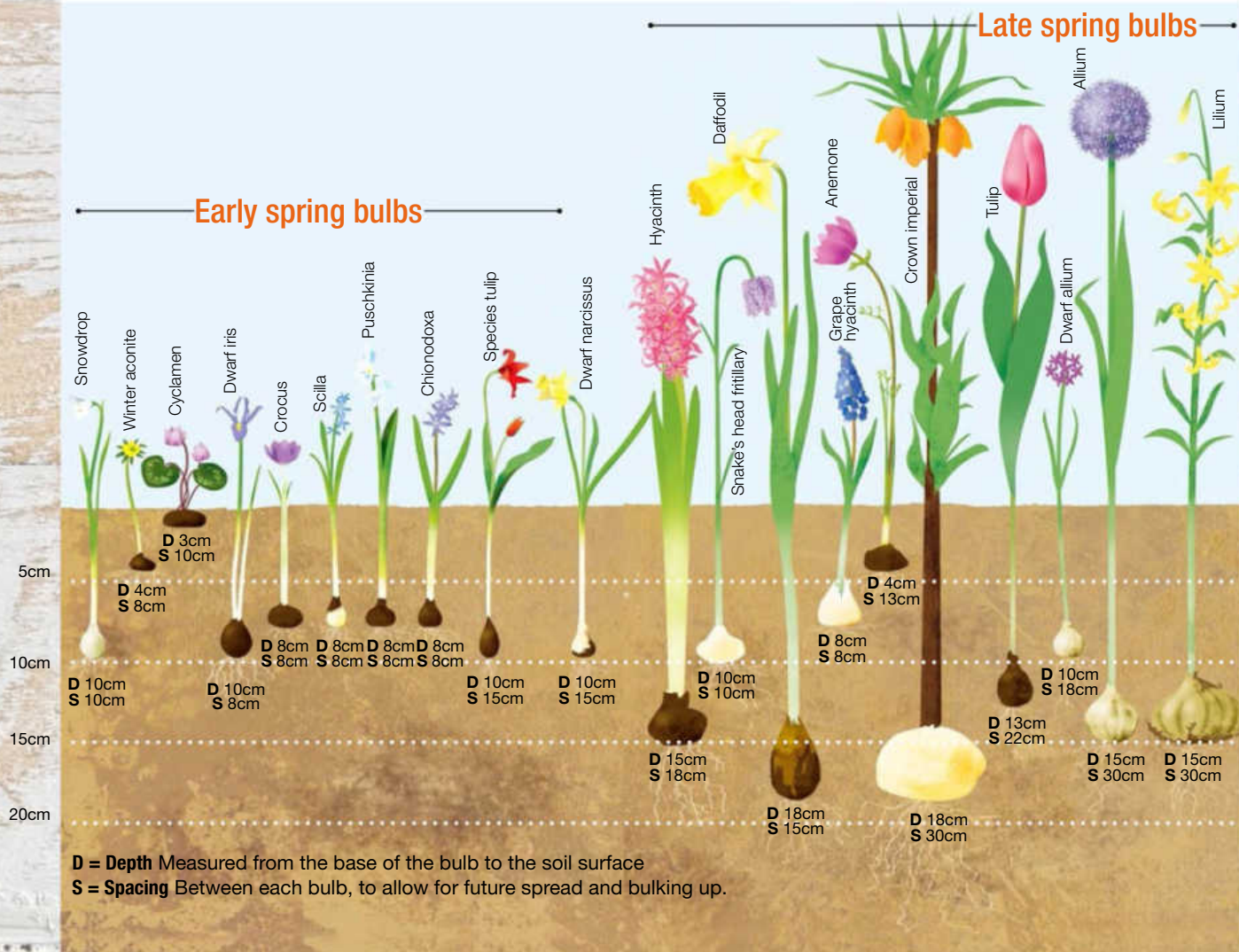
If you want bulbs to flower year after year, you need to plant them at the correct depth. Bulbs planted too shallowly will dry out during summer, and so may not have enough energy to flower the following year. Shallow bulbs are also more likely to be uprooted by birds or gardeners. Don't plant small bulbs too deep, however, as they may

rot or may not have enough energy to reach the surface.

Our chart shows the planting depths for the most popular spring bulbs. A good rule of thumb is to plant spring-flowering bulbs three times as deep as the height of the bulb. This means a bulb that measures 5cm from base to tip needs to be planted with about 10cm

of soil covering it – so the hole should be 15cm deep. On light, free-draining soil that's likely to dry out more in the summer, it helps to plant a little deeper.

Place the bulbs in the hole with their nose, or shoot, facing upwards, and the flattened base facing downwards. Space them at least twice the bulb's own width apart.



Spring-flowering bulbs are perfect for gardeners short on time and money. A handful costs just a few dollars and, once planted, bulbs need little maintenance – just sit back and wait for the display. Small bulbs, such as crocus and some iris and narcissi, are especially useful. They're at the cheapest end of the scale and grow well in pots and hanging baskets.



## Plant a layered pot for maximum impact

Brighten up your patio next spring with pots packed with colour. The trick is to choose the largest pot you can find, then fill it with a range of flower bulbs that bloom in succession over a long

season. By planting in several layers, you'll get greater flower power than by planting a single layer in your container. You can choose almost any spring bulbs but, for a successful combination, check

flowering heights carefully, so the succession of flowers develop in tiers, each higher than the last. This reduces the chance that the tall foliage of daffodils will obscure your tulips.



### 4 steps to... planting a layered bulb pot

**Plants:** *Narcissus* 'Hawera', Grape hyacinth, *Hyacinth* 'Delft Blue' and Tulip 'Sunny Prince'

**1** Choose a large pot and fill the base with potting mix so it is sitting about 25cm below the pot rim.

**2** Add a layer of daffodil bulbs, spaced about 10cm apart. Cover with a 3cm-deep layer of potting mix, then firm down between the bulbs.

**3** Repeat with hyacinth bulbs, spaced about 15cm apart, tulips, spaced at about 22cm and grape hyacinth, spaced at about 8cm apart. Fill pot with potting mix to just below the rim and water well.

**4** The different layers will flower in succession. Water the pot regularly in dry weather, adding a liquid fertiliser once a fortnight. Deadhead daffodils and tulips as their flowers fade, but don't be tempted to remove the leaves, as these produce food to fuel next year's flower production.

### Best bulb-planting tips

- Choose pots at least 35-40cm wide and deep with drainage holes in the base.
- Fill pots with peat-free potting mix or bulb fibre.
- Plant the bulbs at their recommended depths, according to pack instructions.
- Keep the pot in a cool, sheltered, position over winter, to promote good roots and sturdy shoot growth.
- Move the pot into a bright position when the first flowers appear.
- Water whenever the mix dries out, adding a liquid fertiliser once a fortnight. After the flowers fade, let the leaves die down naturally.
- Remove the spent foliage once it turns yellow. Lift the bulbs and keep somewhere cool and dry, ready to plant in your borders next autumn. ►





# Easy ideas for pretty pots

Only have limited space? Let us inspire you with these perfect planting ideas for big impact in small spots



## Use repetition for impact

Planting several identical pots with the same bulb is a simple way to produce a sophisticated look. The repetition will give added impact to your spring display and is effective even if the pots and bulbs are small, making it ideal for those with limited space. Plant around four small bulbs in 9cm terracotta pots (they can be bought from garden centres and craft stores for less than \$5 each). Combine simple terracotta with delicate blooms. Here we've used crocuses for their vivid colour, but you could use any small spring bulb. Place in a line on a windowsill or up your garden steps for a cheering display in early spring.

**Bulb planting depth:** 6-7cm

**Flowers:** *Crocus tommasinianus*

**Also try:** *Muscari armeniacum* or *Scilla siberica*

## Create a focal point on your patio

Every garden, whether small or large, needs focal points to lead the eye and add interest in key parts of the plot. With bulbs it's easy to create one – a low bowl can look great on a table or wall, while a larger pot of bulbs placed at the end of a path or in a prominent place on the patio adds a welcome burst of colour in spring. To make sure you get a long season of interest, either plant a succession of bulbs that will flower for weeks, or combine your bulbs with a perennial to provide permanent interest before and after flowering.

### PURPLE PASSION

Planting for a focal point means the display needs to stand out. Using two plants in the same colour, as we've done here (below), makes for a bold impact. The dark heuchera and purple tulip complement each other beautifully. The heuchera hides any bare earth and will provide a splash of colour during winter until the tulips come into flower.

**Bulb planting depth:** 10-15cm

**Flowers:** Tulip 'Ronaldo' and dark-leaved heucheras

**Also try:** Dark tulips such as 'Queen of the Night' or 'Black Hero' and dark-leaved heucheras including 'Palace Purple' or 'Obsidian'



### TABLETOP TULIPS

The combination of a bowl and small tulips makes the perfect focal point for a patio table or terrace. Choose a vibrant, colourful variety to boost the impact (there's little point in creating a dull focal point). To get a longer-lasting season of colour, try combining two varieties with different flowering times and plant in layers, separating the two layers with potting mix. As one display comes to an end, the next one will follow.

**Bulb planting depth:** 10-15cm

**Flowers:** Tulip *greigii* 'Cape Cod'

**Also try:** Other varieties of *T. greigii* and species tulips, such as *T. fosteriana* and its varieties

If you can't plant your bulbs immediately after you've bought them, store them in a cool, dry place until you have time to get into your garden





### Give your windowsill a boost

Bulbs planted in troughs and window boxes are an easy way to add colour on windowsills and outside your front door. If using a combination of bulbs, plant the taller ones at the back of your planter. Choose a container with drainage holes, and if you're placing it on a windowsill, make sure it fits and is secure. Avoid windy, exposed sills where bulbs will struggle to put on a good display.

#### LIGHT FOR SHADE

Bring life to a gloomy spot using a combination of shade-tolerant flowers. Blue and yellow are the perfect spring colour combination, with the anemone and cowslips (above) both coming into flower together. Anemones like good drainage, so mix three parts potting mix with one part sand when you're planting. **Bulb planting depth:** 5cm – plant bulbs (also called tubers) on their longest side.

**Flowers:** *Anemone blanda* with *Primula veris*

**Also try:** *Scilla siberica* or *Chionodoxa lucillae*

#### DAINTY DAFFODILS

We often think of daffodils as large, yellow blooms growing in borders, but this group of flowers has a lot more to offer. There are many small varieties, lots with delicate flowers in subtle shades, which all wonderfully lend themselves to window boxes. The less blousy flowers also bring sophistication to a scheme. Ensure your window boxes are in a sheltered position and have adequate drainage before planting bulbs in bulb fibre or multipurpose compost. Place twigs in the container, ready to support any toppling blooms.

**Bulb planting depth:** 10-15cm

**Flowers:** *Narcissus* 'Tracey'

**Also try:** *Narcissus* 'Tête-à-tête' ■





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## Late-season flowering



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Allium 'Drumstick'  
ALSDS 10 for \$11  
ALSDS 20 for \$19.50  
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DAFAC 10 for \$19.50  
DAFAC 25 for \$42.50



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DAGRL 25 for \$32.50



Jonquil 'Geranium'  
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Tulip 'Salvo'  
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Tulip 'Gerrit van der Valk'  
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Tulip 'Carnival de Nice'  
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You're spoilt for choice when it comes to selecting gorgeous plants for the shadier areas of your garden.





# *The* **DARK** *side*

Finding it difficult to fill those dry, shady areas under mature trees and along fences? Don't despair – try some of these on for size

**WORDS** STEPHEN RYAN

**E**very garden has its dry, dark places and these can be a real challenge when it comes to plant selection. Or so it would seem when you're hunting around the nurseries for appropriate plant material. But fear not... once you tap into the dark side, it can be incredibly rewarding.

It's important to understand shade and dryness can vary from spot to spot. Shade from trees can be reduced through thinning or lifting canopies. But tree roots can provide stiff competition for water and nutrients. And, though it may seem like sacrilege from a keen plantsman, sometimes we can't see the garden for the tree. So, if its too big, boring or not pulling its weight, then perhaps it needs to go.

If the shade is created by structures, then roots may not be an issue, but the shade could, in fact, be more complete and probably impossible to change. After all, most of us won't pull down our houses for the garden's sake!

All of the following should grow where they are rarely, if ever, watered and they like an aspect with full shade, meaning the sun doesn't get in at all. Some will actually burn in direct light. Given these conditions, they could almost be said to be idiot proof! ►





### 1 *Aspidistra elatior* 'Variegata'

The humble *Aspidistra* was long used as an indoor plant and I still remember pots of it in the barbershop Mum took me to as a small child. No wonder it's called a Cast Iron plant. Released into the garden, it will make a handsome foliage plant to 60cm or so and only needs a little bit of attention to stop its foliage being ruined by marauding snails.

### 2 *Aucuba japonica* 'Rozannie'

A Japanese shrub, with the common name of Japanese laurel, that's usually seen in variegated forms. This has glossy, straight green leaves that are

quite beautiful in the shade. As a bonus, this hermaphrodite form will produce large crops of long-lasting red berries on a bushy, metre-tall shrub.

### 3 *Euphorbia amygdaloides* var. *robbiae*

This is a shade lover in a usually sun-loving genus. It produces a suckering thicket of deep-green foliage topped in late winter with heads of lime-green bracts. Be careful where you release it, as it's very hard to get rid of if you need to, but what a great plant for dry, root-infested shade. Prune the flowered stems at ground level after blooming and control its wayward tendencies, and you will love it.

### 4 *Fatsia japonica* 'Variegata'

Another Japanese shrub that's a must-have, with its huge, glossy hand-shaped leaves on rarely branched stems to 4m tall. A tropical look perfect for those of us not lucky enough to be in the tropics. This variegated form takes things to a new level with its leaves looking as if the tips have been dipped in cream paint. Variegations are a great way to light up a shady corner.

### 5 *Plectranthus oertendahlii*

This is another frost-tender plant, but one that may be a bit of a thug in warmer climes. It trails along the ground and can

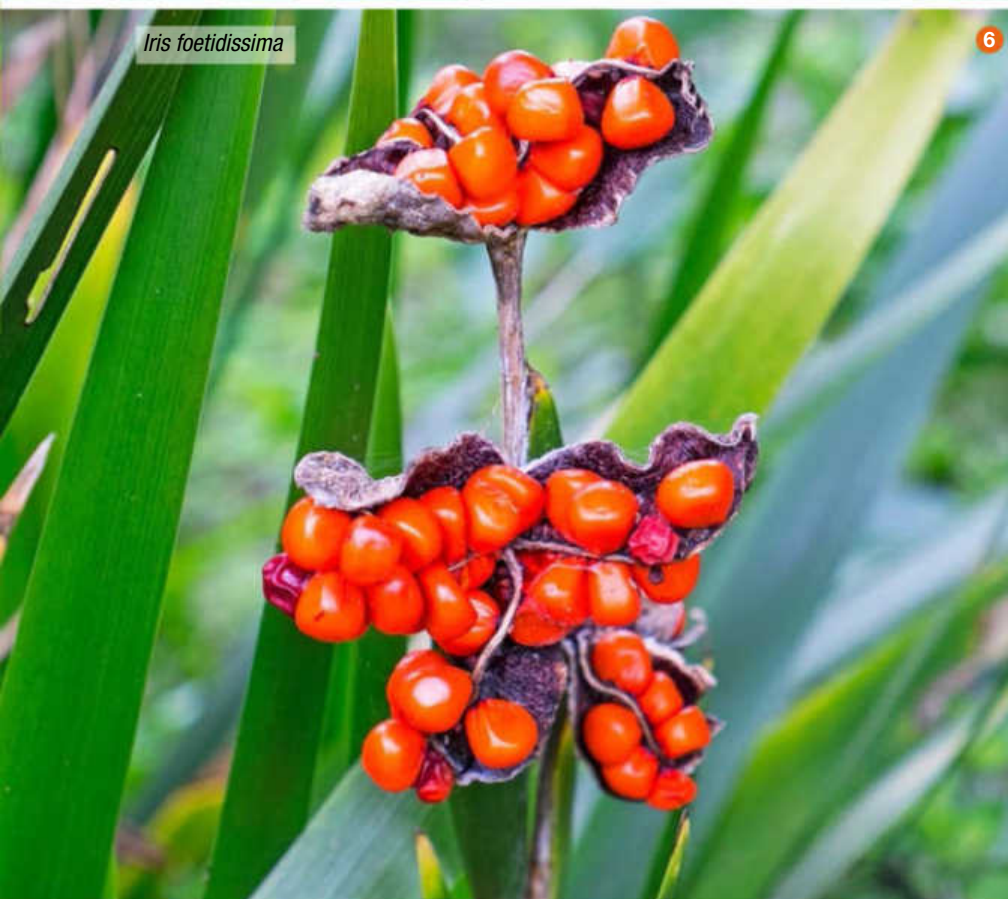


## Plants Shady characters

*Plectranthus oertendahlii*



*Iris foetidissima*



*Ruscus aculeatus* 'Hermaphrodite form'



*Mackaya bella*



cover quite some space in a fairly short time. The tops of the rounded leaves are deep green with silvery veins, and the underside is a rich purple. Come winter, it produces tiny, white flowers that certainly light up the shade, as do most others of this worthy and attractive genus, so go *Plectranthus* nuts!

### 6 *Iris foetidissima*

This strappy-leaved plant grows in clumps and has rich, evergreen leaves that are beautiful in their own right. The flowers are, for an iris, small and dull in colour, usually cream with brown veins, or dusty mauve with darker veins. But this plant

is grown for the huge, green seed pods. As they mature, they split open, exposing orange seeds that are wonderful for flower arranging in the house.

### 7 *Ruscus aculeatus* (hermaphrodite form)

Here's another plant that doesn't need a boyfriend to produce fruit, which, in this case, sits in the middle of what passes for leaves, making it a great conversation piece. This form is quite dwarf and has slightly prickly mounds, little more than 30cm each way. *Ruscus*, in any of its forms, is the plant I use for the driest and darkest spots in my garden – I think it could grow locked

in a cupboard! Plus, the new shoots can supposedly be eaten like asparagus.

### 8 *Mackaya bella*

Why isn't this South African shrub planted more often? It has glossy green leaves and grows to about 2.5m, making it ideal as a screen or fence cover. In late spring and early summer, it produces masses of white trumpet flowers with violet veins, giving the impression of soft mauve from a distance. This plant will tolerate higher light levels than most of the others here, but flags in hot sun. It's also a little frost tender, but always bounces back. ■



# Cool containers

Pretty up your patio or doorstep during the cooler weather with one of these plant combos perfect for small pots

*Berberis thunbergii* 'Bailtwo'

*Saxifraga fortunei*

*Nandina domestica* 'Firepower'

Pansy Matrix 'Red Blotch'

*Heuchera* 'Midnight Rose'

**E**ven though many gardens are winding down for the cooler months, there are still plenty of plants that come into their own now, providing long-lasting colour through the chillier months of the year.

Planted in large containers, these valiant performers will make a huge impact in a small space and will require little maintenance. And if you place the pots where you'll see them every day, such as beside a doorway or along a path, they're sure to raise your spirits, whatever the weather.

## Glowing embers

This richly coloured display provides a warm welcome on a doorstep. In spring, compost the pansies and replant the rest in your borders.

### Other plants to get the look

*Berberis thunbergii* 'Silver Beauty', *Tiarella* 'Neon Lights', *Heuchera* 'Obsidian'.

**Top tip** Deadhead the saxifrage to show off the pretty foliage.





## A touch of frost

Whatever the temperature, these elegant ice maidens make an eye-catching display. Replace the gaultheria with white hyacinths in spring.

**Other plants to get the look** *Dichondra* 'Silver Falls', *Cyclamen coum* (any white variety), *Senecio cineraria*.

**Top tip** Ivy can be a real weed in some situations, so take care it doesn't escape from the pot.



## Crowning glory

Ideal placed in a sunny corner, on a wide gatepost or on a doorstep, this mix of hardy succulents adds an exotic touch.

**Other plants to get the look** *Sedum* 'Gold Mound', *S. spathulifolium* 'Cape Blanco', *S. spathulifolium* 'Purpureum'.

**Top tip** Top-dress with gravel to raise leaves off the damp compost and prevent crown rot.





Kale 'Redbor'

Chilean guava (*Ugni molinae*)

Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*)

Purple sage (*Salvia officinalis* 'Purpurascens')

## Tasty treats

The Chilean guava likes acid soil, so keep it in a pot of ericaceous compost and sink that into the larger container. Keep these edibles near the kitchen door.

**Other plants to get the look** Midyim (*Austromyrtus dulcis*), thyme (*Thymus vulgaris*), kale 'Cavolo Nero'

**Top tip** Protect the Chilean guava from frost in a sheltered spot, porch or cool greenhouse.



*Cornus sericea* 'Flaviramea'Stipa grass (*Anemanthele lessoniana*)*Viola* 'Yellow Sorbet'*Sedum* 'Gold Mound'*Carex oshimensis* 'Evergold'

## Sun splash

This zingy, low-maintenance display adds a ray of sunshine all through winter, with swaying grasses and bold uprights.

**Other plants to get the look** *Carex elata* 'Aurea', *Heuchera* 'Lime Marmalade', *Liriope* 'Pink Pearl'.

**Top tip** Extend the display into spring by underplanting the pansies with dwarf narcissi.

## How to plant the perfect cool-weather container

It's so easy to prepare a stunning pot for your autumn garden. Just follow a few simple steps...

- 1 Half-fill a large container** with a loam-based compost. This is ideal as it releases nutrients slowly over a longer period than multipurpose compost.
- 2 Put in the biggest plant first**, placing it towards the back or in the middle of the container. If the roots are compacted, gently tease them out – don't pull or cut them.
- 3 Add the other plants one at a time**, making sure they are all clearly visible. Turn them around until their most attractive side faces outwards.
- 4 Backfill any spaces with compost**, firming in to make sure there are no air pockets. Keep the surface a few centimetres below the rim.
- 5 Water thoroughly** to settle the roots. If you place the pot in the rain shadow of your house, water occasionally so the compost doesn't dry out.







# Best fronds

Typically, we think of ferns as delicate plants needing constant watering, but this isn't always the case. Discover just how easy it is to grow these diverse plants

## So, what is a fern?

Ferns are an ancient plant group that evolved before flowering plants. Their key defining trait is the use of spores for reproduction instead of producing flowers and seeds. Moisture is needed for spores to grow, which is why ferns are often seen in shaded, damp locations.

## How to grow them

Always plant ferns into rich, fertile soil for best results, but, as they have small root systems, they'll also grow well in pots either indoors or outside. There are even some that are epiphytic and don't require any soil at all.

Watering frequency and light requirements will depend on the fern type you grow. As a general guide, the softer the foliage, the more moisture and shade it will need. Ferns with thick, leathery fronds can handle drier conditions and more sunlight. In humid

climates, ferns can generally tolerate stronger light compared to when grown in arid conditions.

## Maintenance and fertilising

Little effort is required to keep ferns looking good. Periodically trim away old, tatty fronds to make space for new fronds and divide clumping varieties every few years to keep them vigorous.

Ferns don't have a heavy nutrient requirement and, if grown in rich soil, will thrive without any fertilising. For potted ferns, apply an organic fertiliser at half strength when actively growing (usually during spring and autumn) and give regular applications of seaweed solution.

## Did you know?

Yellow, orange or brown 'blisters' on the underside of fronds should not be mistaken for a fungal disease. They are simply where spores are being created to be released for the next generation of ferns. ►





Crimson cirsiums and pink astrantias are perfect pops of colour in a lush, green garden of ferns.



## Propagating ferns

If you'd like to increase your fern numbers, try these ways to get started.

### Division

Some ferns, such as maidenhairs, naturally develop clumps over time, which can then be divided. Division is best done when the fern is actively growing, and simply involves cutting through the root mass with secateurs. Remove any old, tired fronds and pot the new clumps. Water in with half-strength eco-seaweed to reduce stress and encourage root development.

### Cuttings

Some ferns expand by producing runners (called rhizomes) along the soil surface – Hare's foot is one of these. With these ferns, remove a section of rhizome about 10-15cm long that includes a couple of fronds. Hopefully, the cutting will have some roots, which can be buried straight away, and your new fern can start growing. If there are no roots, use small skewers to pin the cutting onto the potting mix surface until roots form. Mist regularly, but don't saturate the mix or the cutting may rot.

### New plantlets

A few ferns produce small plantlets that are removed and grown as new plants. Most grow on the fronds and the success rate with this method is very high – try the Hen and chicken fern. Simply pin down the frond so the plantlet is touching the ground and it will start developing roots. Once established, cut it free from the frond. Alternatively, wait until the plantlet is larger, then remove it from the frond and plant it. Keep the humidity levels high until roots have formed.

Elkhorn ferns also produce new plantlets, which can be cut away when they're bigger than your fist. Dunk them in a diluted solution of eco-seaweed before attaching to a new board or tree trunk.

### Spores

Growing from spores is trickier and requires some patience. Remove a frond that's just about to release its spores (the 'blisters' darken and swell slightly as they mature) and place it in a paper bag. Leave in a warm spot for one to two days during which time the spores will be released and appear as dust.

Sterilise a very fine potting mix with boiling water. Once cooled, spread spores thinly over the mix. Mist with sterilised water, then cover with glass or plastic bags to maintain high humidity. Place in a bright warm place out of direct sunlight. Germination can take up to three months.



A garden of ferns, including the stunning *Dicksonia antarctica*, at the rear, is a sight to behold.



## Some of our fern favourites

They're so old, they predate flowering plants by 200 million years and were munched on by dinosaurs. But there are many different types of modern-day ferns, suited to slightly different conditions – try some of these on for size.



**Tree ferns** – great in warm and cool climates (protect from frost). *Dicksonia antarctica* transplant well and can be sold without roots or fronds. Once planted, water from top of the trunk.



**Holly fern** (*Cyrtomium falcatum*) – has glossy foliage like holly leaves and will grow happily in a range of conditions from deep shade to part sun. Thrives indoors.



**Maidenhair fern** (*Adiantum raddianum*) – a popular fern that does well in pots indoors, and outdoors in a sheltered position. Likes bright shade and must be kept moist.



**Japanese painted fern** (*Athyrium niponicum*) – cultivars are available with white or grey new foliage. They need bright shade and moisture. In cold climates they die down over winter.



**Crocodylus fern** (*Microsorium musifolium*) – fantastic crocodile-skin patterned fronds can grow to 90cm. Likes bright light with high humidity and good drainage.



**Bird's nest fern** (*Asplenium australasicum*) – an epiphytic fern that happily grows in the fork of trees or small pots with little soil. Thick fronds means it can handle dry periods.



**Water ferns** (*Blechnum* spp.) – mostly rosette-forming ferns. As the name suggests, they require plenty of moisture. *B. minus* and *B. nudum* thrive in full sun.



**Staghorn and elkhorn ferns** (*Platycerium* spp.) – stunning ferns commonly mounted onto boards and tree trunks. Both handle light frosts, but elkhorns tolerate drier conditions.



**Hart's tongue fern** (*Asplenium scolopendrium*) – this fern has tongue-shaped leaves up to 40cm long and will handle direct sun, provided the soil doesn't dry out. ■



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# unearthed

All the latest and greatest from the gardening world



## Tool time

Smarter than your average gadgets, these cute, colourful hand tools definitely won't get lost in a pile of mulch or clippings. And the beautiful wooden handles feel so lovely to hold, you'll want to be out there weeding and digging all day long. Who said tools couldn't be stylish? Sunnylife hand tools, \$34.99 each, [yellowoctopus.com.au](http://yellowoctopus.com.au)



## Outside in

Bring the garden into your home with a beautifully simple botanical illustration by Stefan Gevers. These limited-edition prints are signed and numbered by the artist and come in a range of sizes. Prints, from \$49.95, [paperempire.com.au](http://paperempire.com.au)

## Not-so-boring flooring

Want to jazz up your outdoor area? These stylish rugs are made from recycled plastic bags and designed especially for outdoor spaces. A quick wipe with a damp cloth and they're clean. Zagora outdoor rugs, \$90 each, [ecochic.com.au](http://ecochic.com.au)



**BEE NICE** The threat to worldwide bee populations has been big news, but did you know that other insects, such as hoverflies, butterflies, moths, beetles and ants, are responsible for about 40 per cent of crop pollination, according to recent research at The University of Queensland. The lesson here? We should learn to love more than just those buzzy bees.



## Get blown away

Autumn = leaves, so what better time to buy a leaf blower? The 20V Air Turbine will make light work of your autumn leaves because, at a mere 2.6kg, it's super-easy to wield. Plus, the battery and charger are included. Worx, \$229, [worx.com](http://worx.com)



## CAN IT

Is it an olive-oil jug? Is it an upside-down funnel? No, it's a super-fancy watering can by design legend Kristina Stark. And whose garden couldn't benefit from a little bit of fancy? Botan watering can, \$96, [top3.com.au](http://top3.com.au)



## Label love

Paddle-pop sticks are all well and good as plant labels, but sometimes you just want something a bit more fun. Inspired by French antiques, these glass label tubes feature a cute cork stopper in one end. They're an ideal gift for the quirky gardener. Glass label, \$7, [heaveninearth.com.au](http://heaveninearth.com.au)



## Pretty on your patio

There's something about the words 'day bed' that grants permission for lazing about, so who wouldn't want one? We love this retro rattan number. Day bed, \$895, [cranmorehome.com.au](http://cranmorehome.com.au)

## Hot for pots

Cute little plants like succulents and cacti deserve equally cute places to live. These sweet eggshell pots will look beautiful on a table, windowsill or shelf. Ivy Muse Nest pot, \$160, [norsu.com.au](http://norsu.com.au)



## Summer inspiration



**OzAtlas** allows you to track, map and learn about the native plants, animals, fungi and microorganisms in your area. It also includes an improved map tool. Available free from Google Play or the App Store.



**myopengarden.com.au** Need something to do on the weekend and seeking inspiration for your own garden? Look for open gardens and garden events in your area on this handy website.

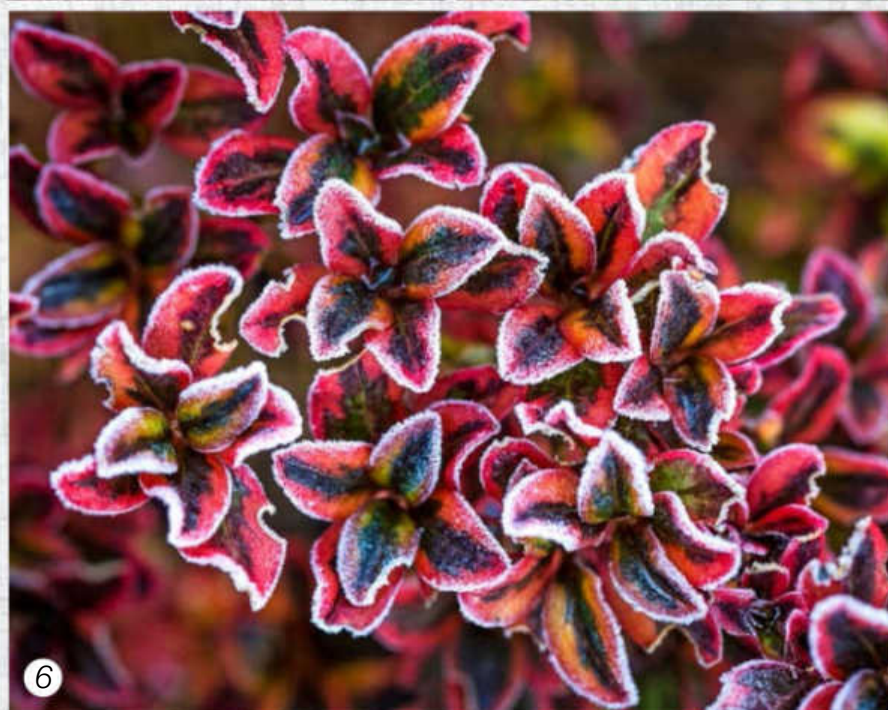


**@urbangardenersrep** There's so much amazing stuff going on in urban gardens, and you can see some of it here.



# unearthed plants

Look out for these new releases in nurseries or online



## 1 *Adenanthos* 'Silver Lining'

The silvery foliage of this native groundcover may look delicate, but this hardy plant will actually tolerate very dry conditions as well as coastal areas. A very low-maintenance plant, it prefers full sun and well-drained soil. [pma.com.au](http://pma.com.au)

## 2 *Brunnera* 'Silver Heart'

The silver, heart-shaped leaves of this shade lover are a great way to bring light to dark corners of the garden. Plant in well-drained soil and fertilise after flowering. Although it looks good all year, as a bonus the plant produces clusters of pretty blue flowers in early spring. [pma.com.au](http://pma.com.au)

## 3 *Correa* 'Bellissimo'

Birds will love your garden if you plant this low-growing native. The pretty pink and yellow bell-shaped blooms are loved by honey-eating birds, and the bush is perfect for pots, massed displays and small gardens. [ozbreed.com.au](http://ozbreed.com.au)

## 4 'Dark Desire' rose

If a rose is not a rose to you unless it has that wonderful, heady perfume, you'll love Dark Desire. This award-winning bloom, which is part of the Parfuma collection, produces deep purple-red blooms on a fairly upright bush and is very disease tolerant. [treloarroses.com.au](http://treloarroses.com.au)

## 5 *Hibiscus* 'Summeriffic'

If you want flowers the size of your head, you can't go past the Hibiscus 'Summeriffic' series. Each bloom is up to 20cm across on this deciduous bush, making it a striking plant during summer flowering. [aussiewinners.com.au](http://aussiewinners.com.au)

## 6 *Coprosma* 'Ignite'

The fiery foliage of this shrub changes from deep red in summer to purple in winter, so you'll love to look at it all year round. Extremely tolerant of dry conditions, it's a great garden performer and is perfect in borders or mixed garden beds. [pma.com.au](http://pma.com.au)



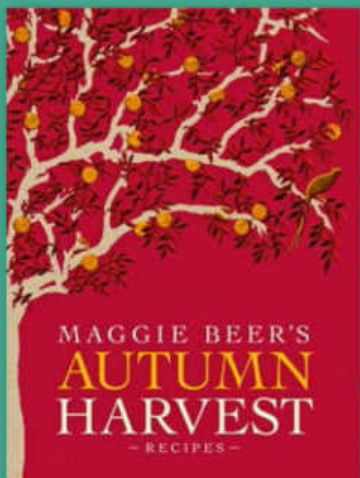
# unearthed books

Stumped for ideas? Use these books for inspiration

## **Maggie Beer's Autumn Harvest Recipes**

(\$29.99, Lantern)

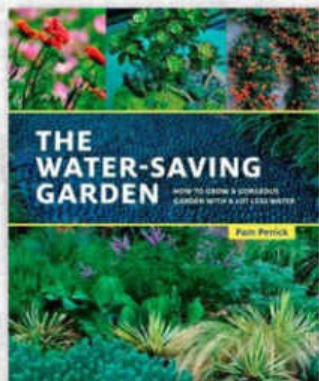
If you agree with Maggie Beer that fresh is best, you'll know how rewarding cooking and eating according to the seasons can be. And when you're faced with that autumn harvest glut, you'll need inspiration in the kitchen. That's where her autumn edition of recipes comes in. You'll never be stuck for ideas again.



## **The Bee Friendly Garden Design**

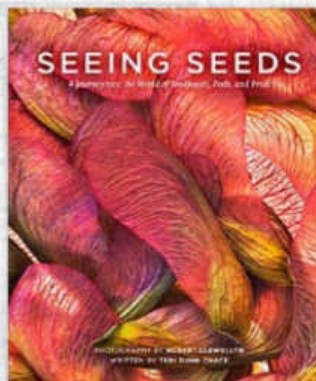
by Kate Frey and Gretchen LeBuhn

(\$42.99, Ten Speed Press) Bees need all the help they can get, so every little thing you can do to keep them happy is good. Award-winning garden designer Kate Frey and bee expert Gretchen LeBuhn teamed to produce this guide to making these busy pollinators at home in your garden.

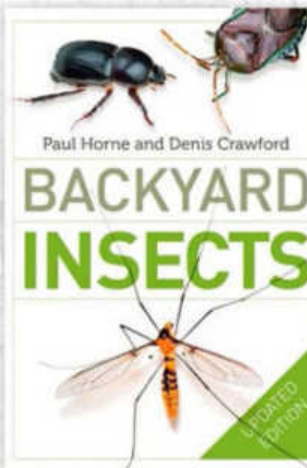


## **The Water-Saving Garden: How to Grow a Gorgeous Garden with a Lot Less Water**

by Pam Penick (\$42.99, Ten Speed Press) Want to save water but are worried your garden will suffer? Fear not. This book contains a range of water-friendly garden designs, a directory of 100 appropriate plant selections and information on better and more efficient ways to use water, including grey-water systems and rainwater harvesting.



**Seeing Seeds: A Journey into the World of Seedheads, Pods and Fruit** by Robert Llewellyn and Teri Dunn Chace (\$29.95, Timber Press) Seeds are little powerhouses of potential. They grow into the most magnificent plants, but are also beautiful just as they are. This book explores the wonder of seeds, how they work, how they're scattered and why they look the way they do. The stunning photographs are unforgettable.



## **Backyard Insects - Updated Version**

by Paul Horne and Denis Crawford (\$24.99, Miegunyah Press) Without insects we'd have no gardens, so love them or hate them, we need to learn to live with them. The updated edition of this handy reference book includes larger-than-life photos and 19 new species, so you'll be able to identify all your local creepy crawlies.



## **The New Tree & Shrub Expert: The World's Best-Selling Book on Trees & Shrubs**

by Dr DG Hessayon (\$29.99, Expert) This handy A-Z guide is packed with reliable, easy-to-follow advice on, you guessed it, trees and shrubs. There are tips on what to buy, how to prune and coping with pests and diseases. No matter what size your garden or what climate you live in, this book will prove a handy resource for plant selection and care.



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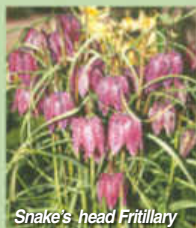


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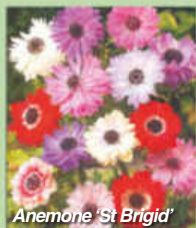


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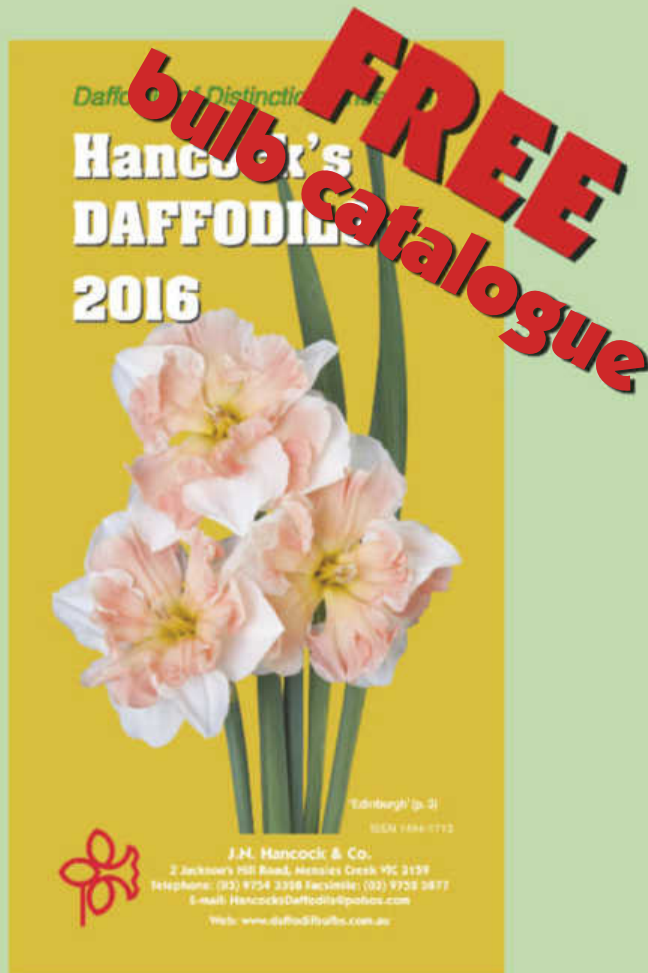
Anemone 'St Brigid'



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## 1 *Borrow the landscape*

If you can see your neighbour's gorgeous jacaranda over the fence, claim it! Live next to a park full of beautiful, leafy trees? They're yours! Incorporating areas of beauty outside your garden will make your space feel much more expansive. And if you're lucky enough to live right next door to a green space, a lattice fence is a great way to let the outside greenery in. ►



# *Small blessings*


Dreaming of a big backyard but living a different reality? These landscape design tricks will help transform your bijou garden from a poky space into a wonderland





## 2 Break up the space

It may sound strange, but breaking up a small space into distinct, usable areas will make it feel bigger – one spot for lounging, one for dining, one for growing veg. It's also a great way to help reduce clutter, which can be the unfortunate result of a multipurpose space, and will immediately make your garden feel like it's shrunk.



## 3 Go vertical

When room on the ground is at a premium, the only option is to go up. Use walls and fences for climbers, espaliered plants or a vertical garden, opt for wall-hanging water features rather than traditional bowls or fountains, and hang flat art rather than using sculpture.

A bit of clever planning and a few visual tricks is all it takes to create the illusion of space



## 4 Leave some room

It can be tempting to fill your garden with wonderful things, but a bit of breathing space, such as an area of lawn or paving, is a must for a feeling of openness.



## 5 *Play with perspective*

Long vertical lines give the illusion of depth, while horizontal lines create a feeling of width. The way you lay your decking timbers or paving can take advantage of this. Emphasising perspective by using plants with large leaves at the front and fine foliage towards the rear of the garden also gives the illusion of space. ►



## 6 *Love the shade*

Every centimetre of your small garden is precious, so even those dark corners that might otherwise be relegated to a utilitarian purpose, such as bin storage, need some love. There are plenty of gorgeous, shade-loving plants to fill those spaces – think hostas, plectranthus, native violets and ferns of all kinds just to name a few.





### 7 Create levels

Vertical space is not just for plants. Using different levels in the garden is a dynamic way to break up the space, creating a little mystery and giving the illusion of a bigger area overall. If you have a flat block, try adding levels with raised planter boxes, a sunken patio or an elevated deck.



### 8 Begin a journey

Nothing makes a garden seem smaller than being able to take it all in at a glance. Create a feeling of space by hiding some areas with screens, hedges or strategically placed borders, so they can't be viewed from your back door or front gate. This tricks your brain into imagining there's more garden there beyond what can be seen. Having focal points that are only visible from some areas in the garden is another way to achieve this in a very small space.

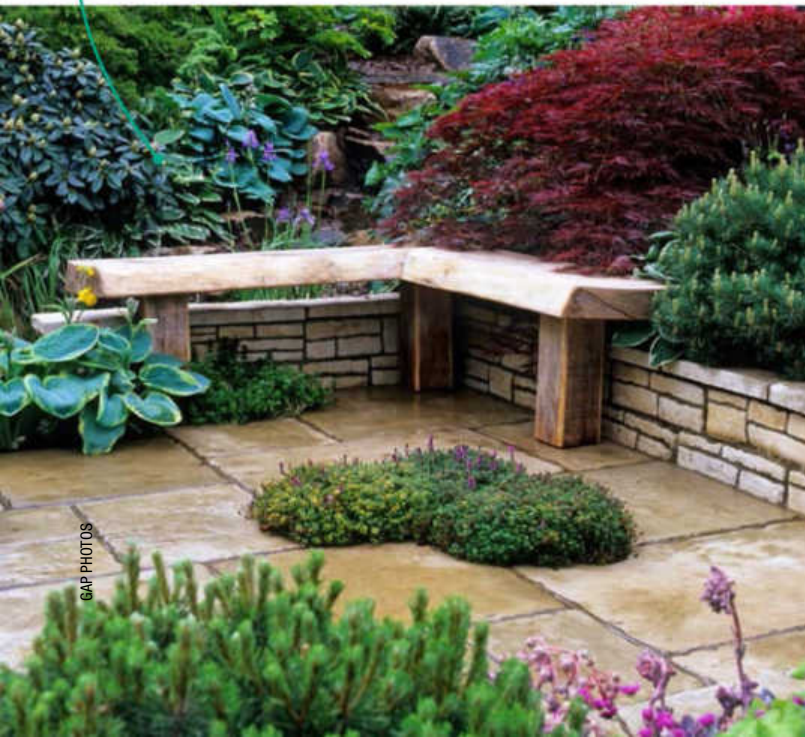
### 9 Forget the seasons

In a small area, you can't afford to sacrifice precious ground to plants that don't pull their weight every season. Everything in a small garden has to work year-round, so foliage is key. If you just can't go without, consider a few pots planted with your favourites, such as spring bulbs, that can be strategically stored away when not at their best.



### 10 Strive for unity

The colours, textures and materials you choose should all work together to create harmony. Limiting your palette in a small space is essential to reducing the clutter and keeping that feeling of openness. This doesn't just apply to your hard landscaping – it's something to keep in mind when deciding on what plants you'll use, too. ■





# Pint-sized PONDS

Water gardens are not limited to only large estates. They can be as simple as a small pot or bucket and your favourite aquatic plant. Have a look at these for some inspiration



## The perfect pot

The easiest way to get started with your container pond is to buy a specially made pot, but that's by no means the only option. As long as a container is watertight, you can use it. And if the container you've set your heart on happens to be made of a porous material (such as concrete or terracotta), it's often a simple matter of using a pond sealant on the inside or a plastic pond liner to make it watertight. And if it's a pot meant for a plant, seal the drainage holes with putty.

**Plants:** Spearwort (*Ranunculus lingua*), Water mint (*Mentha aquatica*), Water lily and White star grass (*Dichromena colorata*)



**A LITTLE  
BIT EXTRA**

Add pretty touches to your container pond with floating candle votives or blooms picked from your garden.

**Which water plants?**

Pond plants fall into three main categories. Floating plants that sit on the water (such as duckweed), plants that have leaves and flowers on or above the water's surface and roots anchored underneath (think water lilies and lotus), and marginal plants that grow on the edges of waterways with their roots submerged in water (such as water iris). Knowing which is which is essential, so you know how deep to set the plants in your pond.

**Plants:** Dwarf cattail (*Typha minima*) and Blue monkey flower (*Mimulus ringens*) ►



## Water lilies

You may be forgiven for thinking you need a big pond for water lilies, but the more petite varieties are quite happy in a container as small as 30cm across. They do, however, need at least four hours of sun to flower well, so take that into account when positioning your pond, and they'll need to be repotted every couple of years. Four of the best varieties for a small space are Helvola (creamy yellow), Andréana (bright pink), Little Sue (pale pink) and Tina (bright purple).



## ***Your Garden tip***

Different water lilies like to be planted at different depths. Check the depth your chosen cultivar prefers before placing in your pond, and prop it up on bricks at the right level below the surface of the water.





## Vintage flair

If you're using a recycled container, try to determine what it has been used for in the past, to make sure there's nothing that might harm your fish or plants. Wine barrels, for example, contain residues that will see your pond residents turning up their toes, so they need to be thoroughly cleaned and lined before use.

## Mozzies be gone

Mosquitoes in the garden are no good for your health or your sanity, so it's essential you keep them out of your pond. By far the best way to stop mosquitoes using your water bowl as a maternity ward is with fish. Australian native rainbow fish are particularly good, as they're frog friendly – unlike many other fish species, they won't eat tadpoles, should any frogs take a liking to your pond. In a small container pond, it's likely you'll only need a few fish, so chances are you won't even have to feed them. If you do, give them only what they can eat in a few minutes, or the excess food will encourage unwanted algae to grow in the water.

**Plants: Spearwort (*Ranunculus lingua*)**



## Soothing sounds

The sound of running water can be soothing and is easily achieved by installing a simple pump. Different pumps are designed for different jobs, so make sure you choose one for the effect you're after – do you want a fountain or a trickle? Solar-powered pumps are available, so there's no need to have ready access to mains power. Be aware, though, that some water plants, such as water lilies, don't like living in moving water.

**Plants: Acorus ■**





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# Easy GARDEN FIXES

If your backyard is not quite the oasis you'd hoped for, it could be more simple to remedy than you thought

**WORDS** LOUISE McDAID

**H**ave you persevered with a garden that doesn't function well? It's surprisingly common for people to stick with a garden they simply don't like. Chances are there are one or two quick design fixes that could make it look better or more useful in a flash.

The biggest single pitfall for new home builders is planning your home without considering its garden. Ideally, the two should complement and reflect each other, and if you aim for a connection between them, they will be happier places in which to spend time. But for existing gardens, here are common garden weaknesses, and how to overcome them. ►





**MATCH  
PLANTINGS  
TO  
LIFESTYLE**



**PROBLEM: Lifestyle mismatch**

If your garden doesn't suit your family's lifestyle, it won't get used. Sound familiar? All that wasted opportunity for a great outdoor area.

**SOLUTION:** Decide what your garden needs. Start with a general idea, then get specific. An outdoor entertaining area is high on many lists, but what type suits? Casual seating or an area for a dining table and lounging? You may want a play space for kids, but there's no need to be restricted to lawn. Some might love paving for scooters, others picture a fairy garden or a place to dig for worms. By narrowing options, and including things that fit with your family's ages and personalities, you'll find workable ideas. Whatever you dream of, imagine it there. If you undertake even one or two of these, you'll use your garden.



**PROBLEM: No garden plan**

Without a plan, gardens can become formless. Spaces are not defined, plants can be muddled and it's not clear how the areas are intended to be used.

**SOLUTION:** Sketch a layout showing what's actually in your garden, and then one with changes you'd like. Show boundaries with fences, walls, hard surfaces, paths, planting areas and positions, and structures.

Time and money constraints mean fixing a garden layout is likely to be a long-term plan, so do a schedule, outline changes you can make right now, and what you need to work towards. Include a style guide and colour scheme so you'll shop for plants and accessories that complement the theme.



**PROBLEM: Out of scale and proportion**

If your garden feels as if it's chaotic and doesn't function well, it might be an issue of scale and proportion. Indoors, homes are in scale with the human figure, but outdoors this doesn't work, so problems are easy to overlook. One of the most common problems is difficulty moving around the garden – think too-narrow paths or steep steps.

**SOLUTION:** Steps in the garden need to be more generous than indoors.

A generous-sized tread is comfortable. Make the riser proportional to the tread for an easy gait up and down steps, and deeper than indoor ones. Similarly, a path or opening for two people to stroll side by side is at least 1.5 metres wide. A good balance is the foundation of a garden.



## Lifestyle Design of the times



### PROBLEM: Bland plants

Having plants based on flower colour alone looks pretty ordinary between flowerings. And relentlessly following trends leads to a lack of established plants.

**SOLUTION:** Leaf colour, shape and texture play a major part in how your garden looks, whether it has a seasonal colour show or is a steady year-round performer. Leaves have sensory appeal, too – hearing their rustle or feeling their velvety touch.

Consider the overall plant's form and structure, which themselves create shapes, masses and textures.

Also, avoid the urge to copy trends, replacing old with new. Established plants are a blessing to low maintenance and are proven survivors. A new plant takes years to grow to a similar size, and needs more effort and resources. Retain healthy plants and selectively update and rejuvenate other areas to suit your house and your garden. You will be rewarded with a garden rich in character and uniquely yours. ■

If some of this feels beyond your time or skills, bring in a professional landscape designer. They don't cost the earth, and you can implement their recommendations slowly to suit your budget

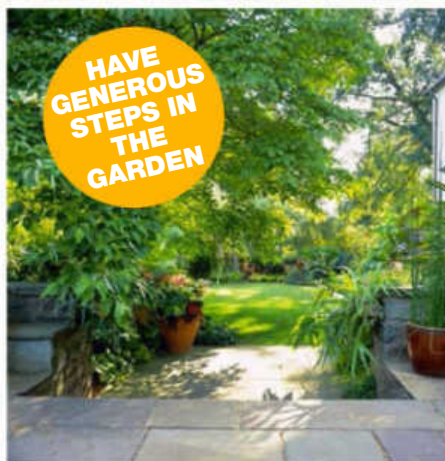
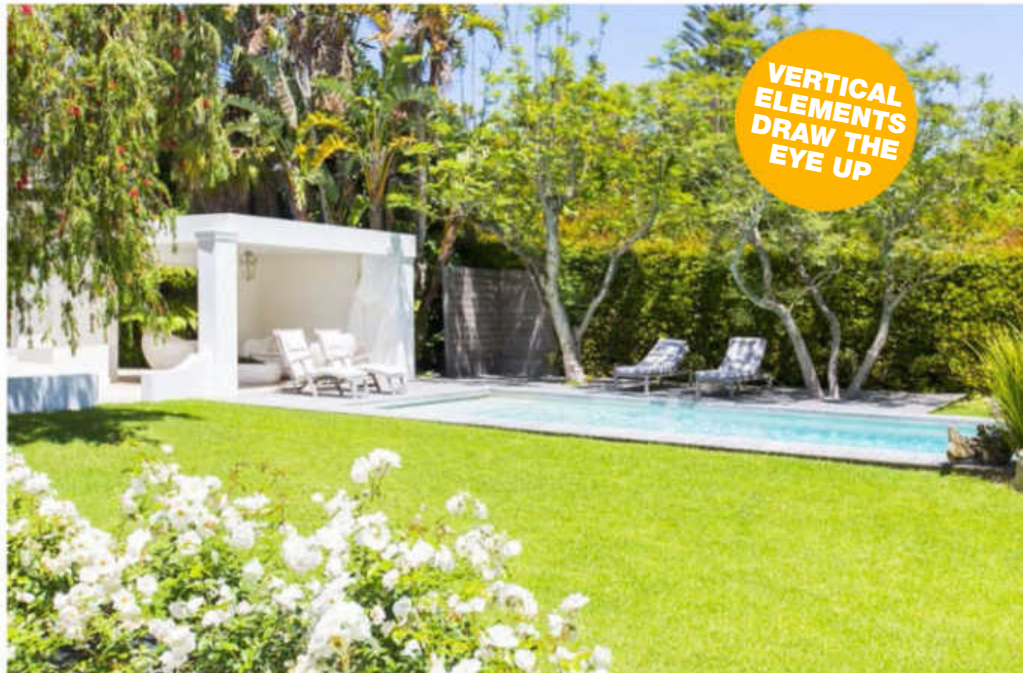


### PROBLEM: Vertical features

Ignoring the vertical possibilities of a garden results in it being flat, which is just plain dull.

**SOLUTION:** Add upright elements and level changes. Walls, archways, pergolas and vertical gardens are all features that draw your eyes up, rather than leaving them tethered to the ground. Look higher by planting trees, tall shrubs or vines on a trellis that will grow upwards. They all add to the garden's visual excitement, whether you're looking from indoors or the sun lounge.

Elements at different heights abolish the boring flats. Incorporate level changes with decking and terracing, and add planting options using raised planters, climbing frames, like teepees, and lattice frames on fences.





# Pretty as *a picture*

Want your photos to really capture the wonder of your garden? We can help

## **Autumn**

### **Wait for a still day**

Check the weather forecast in autumn as strong winds will make photographing autumn colour very difficult.

### **Make the most of colour**

As the sun drops lower in the sky, you can shoot almost all day. There's nothing more satisfying than seeing the light bring out the brilliance in a back-lit maple when the sun is low.

### **Get down low**

Lie on the ground on a blanket to photograph small flowers.

### **Look before you shoot**

When photographing leaves on trees, explore the tree well and be on the lookout for quirky details that aren't immediately obvious. Try each shot from a few different angles.

### **Check your settings**

If possible, control the aperture setting on your camera. Use a shallower depth of field when shooting individual plants. This gives you a soft background to a well-focused, sharp plant.

## **Winter**

### **Highlight bare structures**

If your garden is full of structure, use wider shots, with winter light casting shadows.

### **Look for interesting shapes**

Exploit the monochrome look of the winter garden by looking for shapes to silhouette.

### **Create contrast**

It might sound like anathema to shoot into the sun, but contrast is the biggest problem most garden photographers have to deal with, and winter is a wonderful time because you can shoot all day, even when the sun shines.

### **Make use of the cold**

Get out at sunrise to make the most of any frost before it melts away.

### **Keep it steady**

Position your camera on a wall and set it on self-timer, or use a tripod for wide shots.

### **Leave your plants alone**

Seed heads make great silhouettes, so leave interesting structures on the plants.

### **Forget the flash**

Garden pictures never look great with a flash. If it's too dark, wait for the light to improve.



**T**he only thing better than spending time in a gorgeous garden is looking at pictures of more gorgeous gardens, and with easy-to-use phone and digital cameras, anyone can be an outdoor photographer these days. Take on board these tips from professional garden photographer Jason Ingram and you'll be at the top of your game. Watch out, Instagram!

**WANT TO SHARE YOUR HANDIWORK?**  
Show us your photos on Facebook or Instagram. We'd love to see them.

### **Spring**

#### **Beware of bare soil**

There are still large areas of bare soil in spring, so try going in slightly closer when framing and composing your pictures. And shoot from a lower position to avoid catching any of those bare spots.

#### **Choose your time of day**

The light is starting to get a little stronger at this time of year so be aware of this and make sure you take most of your photographs early in the morning or later in the day when the sun is at its softest.

#### **Look for backlit subjects**

The light shining through the petals of a border of tulips or a mature magnolia, full of flower, is a wonderful sight to capture first thing on a spring morning.

### **Summer**

#### **Choose a cloudy day**

The sun is so high in summer it can produce contrasting conditions, which are difficult to shoot in. The shadows are almost black with no detail. Wait for an overcast day with high, light cloud.

#### **Soften the light**

If you have a tripod, or someone who can hold a diffuser or reflector, it will help you control the light. A diffuser is something like a white sheet or horticultural fleece that you can position between your subject and the sun to soften the light.

#### **Be ready for sunrise**

Get up early or stay up late. It's such a treat to see the sun rising over a garden, with the first rays of light catching the borders.

Or go out in the evening; it's magical.



# Garden *knives*

Got some space in your toolshed that needs filling? Maybe it's time to get the knives out

**C**hances are you've got a pair of secateurs, snips and maybe some hedge shears in your shed, but what about a garden knife? They're one of the most undervalued garden tools around, and they're handy for a multitude of jobs. Here's the rundown of some of the most useful.

## Budding/ grafting knife

This specialist tool is essential if you're grafting your own plants, as trying to make clean cuts with other blades could easily result in injury to both you and your precious plants. Generally, grafting knives have a straight edge, and budding knives have a curved edge with a blunt end that's used to prize open bark and insert the bud. You'll often find folding multipurpose knives that will work for both jobs.

● **Felco grafting knife**, \$27.20, [felco.com.au](http://felco.com.au)

## Pruning knife

These hook-shaped knives are a great alternative to secateurs for those delicate jobs, such as thinning small branches (think your prize rose bushes), removing suckers and cleaning cuts made by saws. Most importantly, make sure the handle is comfortable in your hand – the last thing you want is for the knife to slip. Ouch!

● **Opinel no. 10 pruning knife**, \$59.60, [huntgathergrow.com.au](http://huntgathergrow.com.au)

## Vegetable harvesting knife

Just like different kitchen knives do different jobs, so do different harvesting knives. There are large hook-shaped knives perfect for thick-stemmed veg, small blades with a brush attached for mushrooms, and smaller, more delicate hooks perfect for getting into vines to pick grapes. Choosing your knife (or knives) really depends on what you like to grow.

● **Burgon & Ball vegetable harvesting knife**, \$32, [lynnsrareplants.com.au](http://lynnsrareplants.com.au)

## Hori hori knife

This Japanese name translates as "dig dig", but in reality, this is one seriously multitasking tool. Usually serrated on one side but sharp on both, the blade cuts through roots and soil, making it useful for weeding, digging, planting, dividing plants, and also as a measuring tool when planting.

● **Hori hori knife**, \$42, [forestrytools.com.au](http://forestrytools.com.au)

## Essential maintenance

**Sterilise** At the end of every day of use, clean your knife with rubbing alcohol. This will kill any pathogens and get rid of sap on the blade.

**Oil** Rub mineral oil on the blade before storage to prevent rust.

**Sharpen** Use a whetstone to sharpen the blade every so often. After all, a blunt knife makes hard work and increases the risk of injury to you and your plants. ■











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# Growing up

Take your pumpkins to new heights and find space in any garden to grow these versatile kitchen staples

WORDS EDEN MAHER

**E**asy to grow and fun to experiment with, don't let the size of the vine deter you from growing pumpkins. Yes, if left unchecked they can take up a lot of space, but they can also be trained

up a trellis or veggie cage, along a fence, or over an existing tree. The vines are typically quite large, but new varieties, and a snip here or there, can help keep your pumpkins in check and your cupboard full. ►





## Growing pumpkins

Find a position in full sun and plan their route to maximise available space in your garden. If growing pumpkins up a trellis, teepee or fence, be ready to support the developing fruit when it appears with an upturned pot on a stake or a fruit hammock.

Improve the soil with manure and compost prior to sowing. Plants grown in situ are always more robust than those grown from seedlings. In cooler climates, be ready to sow after the last frost of spring, or provide protection until frosts have passed. In warmer areas, most pumpkin varieties can be sown all-year round, extending your season and your harvest.

Plant seeds around 3cm deep in small mounds about a metre apart. Plant three seeds in each mound to ensure adequate germination, removing the weakest plants to allow the strongest vine to grow. Water the growing plants regularly, especially as they start developing. Pinch out the growing tip when they reach about a metre to encourage side branching and more fruit. Allow at least 2-3m around each plant, if growing them along the ground, to avoid the vines smothering other crops in your garden.

Once the pumpkins start to develop, increase watering and begin fertilising fortnightly with fish emulsion or liquid solutions until the plants start to shrivel. Most pumpkins take around 100 days from sowing to harvest.

## Harvest and storage

Pumpkins should be left on the vine to harden in the sun. When the vine starts to shrivel, they can be harvested, keeping at least 30cm of vine attached if possible. Store them in a cool, dry place with adequate ventilation. Do not allow the pumpkins to touch as this will increase the likelihood of them spoiling.

## Seed saving

Pumpkins regularly cross-pollinate, making it difficult to grow them true to type if you have more than one variety within not only your garden, but a 2km radius! You may not mind what happens when varieties naturally cross-pollinate, as they'll hopefully bring together the traits you love – but if you want to grow pure varieties, it's best to grow only one heirloom variety from either *Cucurbita maxima*, *C. pepo* and *C. moschata*. These species will not cross-pollinate with each other, but they'll readily cross-pollinate with other varieties within their genus and species (for example 'Kent' and 'Waltham Butternut' will cross, however 'Kent' and 'Jarrahdale' will not).

To keep seeds, remove the pulp from a newly harvested pumpkin and place the seeds in a bowl of water to remove excess pulp. Collect the seeds that have sunk, discarding remaining pulp and any seeds that float. Place fertile seeds on paper towels on a windowsill to dry for two or three weeks, stirring every couple of days. Once dry, store in an envelope in a cool, dry place until sowing next spring.

Allow different varieties to cross-pollinate  
and see what surprises you get!



Ensure pendulous pumpkins have enough support if you grow them up a structure.



### DID YOU KNOW?

Those huge pumpkins you see in competitions are a variety called 'Atlantic Giant'. While they can reach phenomenal sizes, they're rarely eaten, being used mainly for stock feed.



## Pumpkins for every taste

### 5 all-time favourite varieties to start growing this season

● ***Cucurbita moschata* 'Kent'**, also known as Jap, these are easy-carve pumpkins with a thin skin and good flavour. Ideally grown in the warmer climates of Australia, each vine produces from two to four pumpkins.

● ***C. moschata* 'Waltham Butternut'** is the sweetest of all pumpkin varieties. Featuring that characteristic bell-shaped fruit with minimal seeds, butternuts can be grown successfully in all states.

● ***C. maxima* 'Queensland Blue'** is an Australian family favourite with exceptional storage qualities, lasting up to six months if stored correctly. An excellent variety to start your pumpkin patch.

● ***C. maxima* 'Jarrahdale'** originated in Western Australia. It features an easy-peel skin with rich, dry flesh that's ideal for roasting. This is a large vine, requiring plenty of space to produce only one or two fruits per vine.

● ***C. maxima* 'Golden Nugget'** is ideal in small gardens, or where space is limited as it will grow successfully in a pot. It produces five to eight small orange pumpkins per bush.

### 5 less-common varieties to tempt your tastebuds

● ***C. pepo* 'Winter Luxury'** is a US hybrid prized for its pie-making qualities. A sweet-style pumpkin with exceptionally smooth flesh, it's worth a try if you love a little mash with your meat and veg.

● ***C. pepo* 'Styrian Hulless'** is grown primarily for its seeds. Pepita or pumpkin seeds are delicious, nutritious and a valuable superfood. Harvest when fruit becomes streaky.

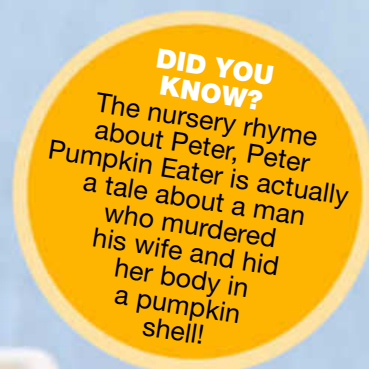
● ***C. maxima* 'Turkish Turban'** is a stunning pumpkin with striped orange fruit and an unusual turban shape at the top. Not only ornamental, the fruit is also delicious.

● ***C. moschata* 'Musquée de Provence'** is a French heirloom variety with deep orange flesh. A large pumpkin produces fruit up to 9kg, so one goes a long way to feeding family and friends.

● ***C. maxima* 'Guatemalan Blue Banana'** is ideal if water is limited as they still fruit under dry conditions. It's a vigorous vine that spreads rapidly, producing an abundance of fruits. ►







**Butternut pumpkin with mascarpone, parmesan and sage**

**Serves 2**

*Olive oil*

*1 small butternut pumpkin, halved lengthways, seeds removed*

*Small handful sage leaves, chopped*

*4 tbsp mascarpone*

*2 tbsp grated parmesan*

Spoon a little oil into each half of the pumpkin and add the sage. Roast at 180°C for 40-50 minutes, or until tender and toasted around the edges. Spoon mascarpone into the hollows and stir, season and scatter with parmesan.





### Pumpkin patties

**Serves 2**

300g roughly mashed, cooked pumpkin  
100g feta, roughly crumbled  
Handful parsley, chopped  
1 tbsp pine nuts, toasted  
Flour, for dusting  
Olive oil  
Natural yoghurt, salad and lemon wedges, to serve

1 Mix pumpkin, feta, parsley and pine nuts and season well. Shape into 2 patties and dust with flour. Chill for 20-30 minutes.  
2 Heat a little oil in a non-stick pan and fry patties for 10 minutes, turning carefully once, until golden. Serve with yoghurt, salad and lemon wedges.

### Pumpkin and sausage pasta

**Serves 2**

Half an onion, chopped  
250g pumpkin, peeled and cut into small cubes  
4-6 sausages, skins removed and cut into chunks  
Olive oil  
200g linguine, cooked

Handful of parsley, chopped  
Handful of basil, chopped  
Chilli oil, to serve (optional)

Fry onion, pumpkin and sausage together in a little oil for about 10 minutes, or until cooked. Toss through linguine, herbs and seasoning. Add chilli oil, if you like. ■



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# *Rainbow power*

Boost your brainpower with a bright selection of homegrown goodness



**E**ating a colourful variety of fruits and vegetables is not only a good thing for your body, it helps improve your brain function (and makes for an extra-pretty veggie patch). And when it comes to garden rainbows, there are just so many to choose from.

### Tomatoes

These powerhouses are packed with two of the antioxidants our brains love most – lycopene and beta-carotene. Lycopene, in particular, has been shown to help the brain defend itself against attack from free radicals.

**Eat** Many a family-favourite recipe includes tomatoes – think tasty pasta sauces, yummy salads, or even balsamic roasted tomatoes.

**Grow** Try planting colourful varieties to liven up things in the garden even more. Have a look at Black Russian, Green Zebra, Lemon Drop or Violet Jasper – they all look great in salads.

### Turmeric

This spice has long been lauded for its healing properties. It's been suggested that the powerful antioxidants present in turmeric may inhibit mental decline, and a recent study from Germany suggests it may also influence brain regeneration.

**Eat** A staple ingredient in curries, turmeric can be used fresh or dried. It also makes a great addition to a delicious spice rub for meat.

**Grow** Turmeric likes a warm, frost-free climate. The plant also produces beautiful ginger-like flowers that are worth growing the plant for themselves.

### Sunflower seeds

Sunflowers never fail to raise a smile, and their power-packed seeds should also have you feeling happy. They're a great

source of vitamin E, which is essential for good brain health.

**Eat** Sprinkle over your breakfast cereal, add to biscuits and slices, spoon over a salad for extra crunch, or toast with salt and chilli for a tasty snack.

**Grow** Plant in a sunny position in spring or early summer. There are many varieties available, but the giant ones are particularly fun to grow, especially for the littlies. Giant Russian grows to 3m tall, with flower heads up to 50cm across, and is a great variety for edible seeds.

### Kale

Dark green leafy veg are great sources of iron, and deficiencies in this mineral have been linked to altered brain function and development in kids. But queen of the leafy greens is kale – it's one of the most nutrient-dense veg out there. Not only is it a great source of iron, it's full of vitamins and minerals, including vitamins C and B6.

**Alternative** Not a kale devotee? Get your leafy green intake with rainbow chard and up the rainbow ante even more.

**Eat** Use it raw in salads or cooked for a softer texture, turn it into chips by lightly frying in vegetable oil, or add it to a green juice or smoothie.

**Grow** This brassica likes the cold, but will grow happily in warmer climates. You can harvest the leaves individually, as you want them, to give you greens for months. Feed fortnightly with a liquid fertiliser to keep them feeding you.

### Blueberries

Not only are these guys tasty, they're packed with antioxidants, which help boost memory and protect brain function. One recent US study even indicated they could help reverse age-related memory loss.

**Eat** Delicious eaten straight from the bush, they're also a fab addition to fruit salads and breakfast cereals, as well as baked into muffins and cakes.

**Grow** There are blueberries to suit a wide range of climates, so choose one that's right for your area – you'll get a better yield if you have more than one variety.

### Beetroot

Recent studies from the US have shown beetroot may help increase blood flow to the brain, thanks to generous amounts of nitrate in this root vegetable. This may be an effective way to combat age-related decline in brain function.

**Eat** Can be grated raw into a salad, or boiled or roasted and eaten hot or cold. Also delicious whizzed with Greek yoghurt and cumin and used as a dip.

**Grow** Beetroot is easy to grow from seed. Just remember to thin out the seedlings after they appear to give your individual beets some room to move.

### Fresh is best

It will come as no surprise that most fruit and veg contain their highest level of health-boosting nutrients when they're at peak ripeness. They can lose some of that valuable goodness when they're stored after picking, whether that's on the kitchen bench, in the fridge or frozen, canned or pickled. The moral of the story? Pick vegetables fresh from your garden only when you intend to eat them to maximise the nutritional benefits. ■





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# Grow your own *spinach*

Sown now, you can enjoy the fresh leaves of this easy-to-grow and versatile vegetable right through to winter

**S**pinach is one of those vegetables that holds bad memories for many people – perhaps because as children they were force-fed overcooked portions! But it's a tasty, versatile and leafy vegetable that can be enjoyed raw or lightly cooked, on its own, delicately seasoned or added to a host of dishes.

Homegrown spinach has a tender succulence (often with a slight buttery taste) that sets it apart from bagged supermarket offerings that can be tough and soon start to deteriorate in the bag.

A salad is made all the better with the addition of baby spinach leaves, harvested when young and tender. Freshly harvested spinach makes a great last-minute addition to a stir-fry or a delicious vegetable dish when combined with lightly fried garlic and a dash of freshly ground black pepper. With ricotta and herbs, it's a classic filling for cannelloni. Choose some of the red-veined varieties to add more colour to your plate.

Spinach certainly has versatility, but the best thing is that it's also easy to grow, thriving in a fertile, moist spot, and with a bit of protection, producing later harvests for you to enjoy into the winter months. You can sow from early spring onwards for a succession of harvests, however, it's prone to bolting in hot weather. Sow in autumn, as the lower temperatures and higher soil moisture will mean you get more leaves before it flowers.

Popeye had it right – spinach is full of vitamins A and C, folate and fibre

## *Easy steps to superb spinach*

- 1** Choose a sunny or part-shaded spot and fork in some well-rotted manure. Sow the seed along a prewetted drill, 1.5-2cm deep, 30cm between rows. Cover and water so the soil is just moist.
- 2** Thin out the seedlings at regular intervals, removing the more congested and weaker plants, to a final spacing of about 15cm.

- 3** After thinning, water well to resettle the soil around the roots. Keeping the soil moist not only decreases the risk of plants bolting, but produces more tender, succulent leaves.
- 4** Spinach is ready to harvest six-10 weeks after sowing, and growth is quickest during warmer weather. Use a sharp knife to avoid pulling the plants and loosening them in the ground.



## GROWING TIPS

- ✿ Choose a sheltered spot with a moisture-retentive soil, and try to avoid hotter and drier sites as these conditions will increase the risk of the plants bolting and running to seed.
- ✿ Improve the soil texture by incorporating bulky organic matter, such as garden compost or well-rotted manure, to boost the plants' growth rate and cropping, while reducing the chances of bolting.

- ✿ Sow spinach in punnets for planting out when 5-8cm tall, if you prefer not to direct sow.
- ✿ Create temporary shade if weather conditions turn very hot to reduce the risk of bolting and to produce a more tender leaf.
- ✿ Protect spinach plants from slugs and snails by making mulch barriers at the base of young plants. Alternatively, apply a nematode-based biological control after sowing. ■



### **Your Garden *tip***

Strawberries, peas and beans are great companion plants to grow with spinach. The peas and beans are ideal as they provide shade for the growing leaves.





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# *Crunch* time

Apples and pears are no longer confined to commercial orchards. Decorative, edible and functional, these popular pome fruits are finally making their mark in gardens of all sizes

WORDS EDEN MAHER





### ***Your Garden tip***

Pears will not ripen well on trees. The best way to ripen them is at room temperature placed in a paper bag, or with bananas or apples

**T**he enormous range of apples and pears available is almost overwhelming. Forget those five or six you know from the supermarket – when you grow your own, you have hundreds of different varieties to choose from. So, what do you do when you're confronted with so much choice? Look at what you want from your fruit (fresh, cooking or cider) and then check which varieties are best suited to your climate.

**EATING APPLES** fresh from the tree is so different to anything you will buy from the supermarket. Yes, picked too early they can be a little sour, but when you get it right, there's nothing on earth like them. Many heritage varieties are prized for their sweetness, but because they don't look perfect or transport well,

they're not commercially available. That's why they make the perfect addition to your home garden. Try Cox's Orange Pippin, Gravenstein, Beauty of Bath or Geveveston Fanny for a combination of early, mid- and late-ripening varieties.

**FRESH PEARS** are a delicacy. Usually picked far too early to allow time for effective transport, at home pears fresh from the tree are incredibly sweet and something to savour. Grow Williams because they're soft and juicy – they never taste the way they should when you buy them at the grocers. Also try Doyenne Du Comice and Josephine.

**WHEN SELECTING** apples and pears for cooking, choose firmer-fleshed varieties that will hold their shape when

cooked. Popular pears for cooking include Beurre Bosc and Beurre d'Anjou, while Bartlett pears are best for sauces as they disintegrate rapidly when heated. The best apples for cooking include Rome Beauty, Stone Pippin and the good old Granny Smith. But when it comes to purees and sauces, you can't go past Bramley's Seedling.

**CIDER APPLES AND PERRY PEARS** are high-juice fruits. Classed as Bittersharp, Bittersweet, Medium Sharp and Sweet, these apples are grown for what they will add to the finished beverage. According to cider maker Jonathan Mackie from the Daylesford Cider Company, when it comes to cider, it is often a case of the more the merrier. He combines ►





Cox's Orange Pippin

Spartan

Granny Smith

Lord Derby

Blenheim Orange

Egremont Russet

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
Alexander the Great is widely credited with introducing dwarf apples to Europe in the 4th century BC.



17 varieties of cider apples to make his prized cider because each adds to the complexity and depth of flavour in the cider. But when you're getting started, Jonathan suggests keeping it simple. He recommends planting Kingston Black, Yarlington Mill and De Bouteville because each of these can be used as a single variety cider or the base of a more complex concoction of your own creation.

**PERRY PEARS** are classified in the same way as cider apples and it is the combination of flavours that adds complexity to the perry. Popular pears for perry include Gin, Green Horse and Yellow Huffcap, which are all Medium Sharp pears, as well as Moorcroft, which is classified as Bittersharp.

### CONSIDER THE CHILL

You've chosen your top varieties, now avoid possible disappointment by checking out their chill requirements – this is the number of hours a variety needs under a certain temperature in order to set fruit. Most apples and pears are listed with their chill requirements for easy selection, but if in doubt, look for low-chill varieties, which fruit successfully in temperate and warm climates. Apples with low-chill requirements include Fuji, Sundowner, Pink Lady and Red Gala. Suitable pears include Corella, Flordahome and Hood.

### Landscaping with fruit trees

Substitute ornamental trees for edibles, such as apple and pear trees. Suitable for gardens of all sizes, fruit trees can be grown as hedges, specimen trees or potted plants. Most apples and pears can now be purchased on dwarf rootstocks, making it much easier to grow fruit trees at home. If you're concerned about fruiting trees taking up too much space, here are a few extra tips to help you maximise your harvest and your space.

- \* Espalier is the art of training fruiting plants against a flat wall or trellis. It's decorative and productive, taking up minimal space with maximum impact.

- \* Dwarf rootstocks help to minimise the overall size of the mature tree, while also drastically reducing pruning requirements. Look for dwarf, semi-dwarf and step-over varieties.

- \* Prune to a height you can reach. Keeping trees shorter saves on space and also makes harvest, maintenance and crop protection much easier tasks to conquer.

- \* Multi-grafted trees offer several varieties on the same tree. These are a great choice when space is limited.

- \* Multi-planting is when two or three fruit trees are planted in the same hole. This offers loads of plant choice in a limited space.

- \* Potted fruit trees are perfect in small spaces, but they do require regular watering, root pruning and maintenance. Start with a pot at least 20 litres in size and a good-quality potting mix.

### 10 tips for growing apples and pears

- 1 Plant in winter when they are available as bare root. This is when they are dormant and it will result in minimal transplant shock.
- 2 Choose a location in full sun (five or six hours of sunlight per day). Without adequate sunlight, they will fail to fruit.
- 3 Prepare the soil properly by incorporating organic matter and digging a hole much larger than you need. This will allow the roots to spread effortlessly through the soil.
- 4 Stake trees at planting to prevent root damage and to provide stability on windy days.
- 5 Fertilise when leaves begin to appear in spring and again in autumn with aged manures, compost and seaweed solutions.
- 6 Water regularly, especially during establishment and fruiting. Automatic irrigation systems are usually the best as fruit trees prefer a regular supply of water.
- 7 Prune regularly to keep trees compact and your harvest within reach.
- 8 Net to prevent fruit loss from birds as soon as fruit begins to develop.
- 9 Prevention is better than cure, so spray at bud burst or whenever you see signs of infestation. Organic and chemical sprays are available, so read the labels carefully.
- 10 Pick at the optimal time for consumption. Fruit can be stored in many ways, with most apples lasting several weeks in the crisper. Otherwise, cook, stew, brew or freeze your crop for maximum flavour and to reap all the rewards of your homegrown produce. ►

Kids love tending to apples and pears – and picking them in your own backyard is so much fun

Versatile, delicious and easy to grow, apples are the basic ingredient in so many delicious treats, including cider, chutney, marmalade and custard sauce.







GAP PHOTOS





**TIP** To prepare the shaved pears ahead, simply submerge them in a bowl of water, acidulated with the juice of a lemon. This will stop them turning brown. Drain and pat dry before scattering over the salad.

## Shaved pear, cheese & bresaola salad

- Serves 4 for lunch or as a starter
- Prep 10 mins • Cook 5 mins

100g walnut halves (or pecans)  
2 crisp pears  
2 heads red chicory or radicchio,  
broken into leaves  
100g bresaola (or prosciutto)  
140g soft blue cheese, sliced  
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

### DRESSING

2 tbsp red wine (or port)  
2 tbsp balsamic vinegar  
1 tbsp caster sugar

- 1 Toast nuts and make dressing first as they will need to cool.

- 2 Heat oven to 180°C.

3 Put walnuts on a baking tray and toast for 5 mins or until dark golden. Cool.

4 Put wine or port in a small saucepan with vinegar and sugar. Boil for 3 mins or until slightly syrupy (it will thicken as it cools, so don't get carried away), then take off the heat and set aside.

5 When ready to serve, shave thin slices from pears using a large, sharp knife, mandolin or potato peeler. Mingle them together with leaves, meat, cheese and nuts on a large platter.

6 Season dressing, then drizzle over the salad, followed by the oil. Enjoy straight away.

## Baked apple & toffee crumble

- Serves 6 • Prep 20 mins plus resting
- Cook 1 hr

### APPLE LAYER

100g raisins  
100g pitted soft dates, snipped  
into small pieces with scissors  
85g light muscovado sugar  
3 tbsp dark rum (or orange juice)  
25g unsalted butter  
1 tsp mixed spice  
Zest and juice of 1 lemon  
4 Bramley's Seedling apples, about 800g,  
peeled, cored and cut into 1cm rings

### CRUMBLE

125g plain flour  
100g unsalted butter  
50g light muscovado sugar  
3 tbsp jumbo oats  
25g flaked almonds (or use any other  
nuts you like)  
Custard or ice-cream, to serve

- 1 Heat oven to 170°C.

2 Put everything for the apple layer, except lemon juice and apples, into a bowl and microwave on HIGH for 1½ mins until butter has melted and sugar is syrupy.

3 Toss in apples and lemon juice, then spoon into a medium baking dish, making sure dried fruit is evenly distributed.

4 Rub flour and butter together, first into fine crumbs, then keep going until the mix forms bigger clumps, a bit like a rough biscuit dough.

5 Stir in sugar, oats and almonds.

Scatter over the fruit, then cover with foil and bake for 1 hr, removing foil for the final 30 mins, until crumble is golden and bubbling.

6 Rest for 10 mins, then serve with custard or ice-cream.







### Squidgy pear & hazelnut chocolate spread cake

- Serves 8 • Prep 15 mins
- Cook 40 mins

50g unsalted butter, softened, plus a little to grease the tin

400g jar hazelnut chocolate spread

3 large eggs, at room temperature

140g self-raising flour

25g cocoa

2 ripe but not squishy pears, peeled, quartered and cored (pears with a rounder shape work well)

2 tbsp apricot jam, warmed and passed through a sieve

50g whole hazelnuts, blanched  
Double cream, to serve

1 Heat oven to 140°C.

2 Butter then line a round, 23cm springform baking tin. Put chocolate spread in a large bowl and add butter, eggs and a pinch of salt. Whisk for 1 min with electric beaters until mixture is smooth and slightly bubbly.

3 Sift in flour and cocoa, then fold in with a spatula until smooth. Scrape into tin and level the top.

4 Peel, quarter and core pears. Cut 4 slits through the fat part of each quarter, then press lightly to make a fanned shape.

5 Use a pastry brush to glaze pears with apricot jam, then lift onto the cake in a clock-face pattern. Don't press pears into the mix.

6 Scatter with nuts and bake for 40 mins until risen with a thin crust. The cake will have a very slight wobble when it's ready, and a skewer inserted into the middle will come out coated with soft cake batter.

7 Brush another thin layer of jam over the pears (this stops fruit from turning brown).

8 Cool in the tin and serve warm or cold with double cream. ■

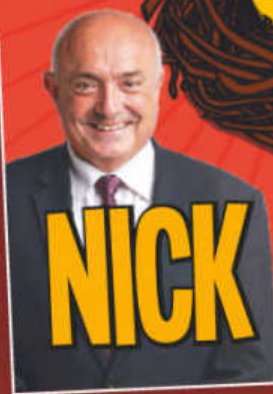


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# Garden BASICS

Know-how ● Nurturing ● Advice ● Success



Follow Steve Falcioni's expert gardening advice, whether it's cleaning your tools, dividing your favourite plants or discovering the best way to make compost

*Autumn is...*

... time to get busy fixing things. Whether it's sharpening the secateurs ready for a good prune, feeding the lawn and repairing summer damage, or planting in bare spots – get busy!



## Tool time

After a heavy spring and summer workout, it's time to spruce up your tools with a bit of TLC. Here's the inside word on what needs doing

### Secateurs

Secateurs quickly clog up with dirt and sap and become hard to open. In addition, blunt and dirty blades create jagged cuts and make pruning a harder task, so they should always be well-maintained.

Good quality secateurs can be completely disassembled for easy maintenance. Simply unscrew and separate all the parts. Dab some oil on each piece and rub with a metal scouring

pad to remove all grime. Wipe clean with some more oil and a fresh cloth.

Next sharpen the blade again by adding oil and carefully rubbing the blade in small circular motions against a sharpening stone. Work along the entire length of the blade, always keeping it at a 20-25-degree angle to the stone. Once sharp, turn the blade over and, at a five-degree angle, give a light rub against the stone to remove tiny burrs.

Reassemble the secateurs but don't overtighten the main screw. Add some oil to the hinges and they should spring apart easily when unlocked.

### Other hand tools

Use the oil and scouring pad method to also clean gardening forks, shovels, hedging shears, rakes, loppers and more. Sharpen any blades in a similar fashion as the secateurs and leave a light oil coating for future protection. Check





## Your Garden tip

Take photos as you pull apart your secateurs as a handy reference to help you put them back together after cleaning.



Now is the time to carry out maintenance tasks on your tools to keep them in tip-top shape.



wooden handles for cracks and replace if needed. Sand splintery spots and finish off with a coat of varnish or wood oil.

## Pressure sprayers

Many sprayers only get a quick rinse after use, which leads to a build-up of residue. This residue, along with dirt particles, can be corrosive, cause blockages and shorten the life span of the sprayer.

Use warm, soapy water to thoroughly wash the sprayer. Then pour one or two litres of the water into the bottle and pressurise the sprayer. Remove the nozzle from the tip and squeeze the trigger. As the soapy water moves

through, it will clean any internal residue. Once finished, give the sprayer a run-through with fresh water.

While everything is apart, check the rubber seals and replace any that are corroded. Give the nozzle a rinse in the soapy water before reattaching – and then you're done.

## Lawn mowers

For safety reasons, pull the cap off the spark plug before working on your mower as some can kick into life when you manually turn the blades.

Turn the mower on its side and inspect the blades for chips and general wear, and replace if needed. There'll also be a build-up of grass cuttings and dirt all around this area, which needs scraping away. If left there, it absorbs moisture when the mower is used on damp grass and causes the metal to rust.

Turn the mower upright and brush the entire area to remove dirt and grass blades. Spray the engine with WD-40 to

loosen soot and oil stains and wipe with a cloth. If the mower has been difficult to start, replace the spark plug.

## Other power tools

Chainsaws, shredders, whipper snippers and more will all benefit from a brush and wipe down to remove grime. Chainsaw teeth also need to be sharpened. This is easier to have done professionally.

## Wheelbarrows

Use the hose and a stiff brush to clean the wheelbarrow, particularly the underside where dirt accumulates unseen. Check the tyre is fully inflated and grease the axle.

If your wheelbarrow has wooden handles, they'll benefit from a light sanding and oiling to make them easier to hold.

Inspect metal wheelbarrows for any chips in the paint – these will rust if left alone. Sand the area, apply anti-rust paint and then an outdoor enamel paint over the top for long-lasting protection.



# Dreaming of a lush lawn

If your lawn is far from that rich, green carpet you've always dreamt of, then check out these common lawns problems, along with their solutions.

See which apply to your lawn and take action!

**COMPACTION** Roots need air within the soil, but foot traffic can pack down soil preventing air (and water) from finding its way in. Lawns will fail to thrive as a result. **SOLUTION** At close intervals, push a garden fork 10-15cm into the soil to create small air pockets. For large lawns, hire a coring machine to get the job done faster. Brush river sand into the new holes for longer-lasting improvement. To improve clay compaction, it's worth applying some eco-flo gypsum.

**ACIDIC SOIL** Australian soils are commonly too acidic, which makes it hard for turf to take up all the nutrients it needs. **SOLUTION** Test the pH and if it's below 6.5, apply eco-flo lime or eco-flo dolomite as a fast-acting fix.

**BARE PATCHES** Exposed soil ruins the look of a lawn and encourages weed growth. Patches can be caused by

excess traffic, compaction, lack of sunlight or from summer weeds that have subsequently died off.

**SOLUTION** Loosen up the patch with a garden fork and lay new turf, runners or sow seed. Keep moist until the new grass establishes. If caused by foot traffic or lack of sunlight, consider changing your lawn layout as bare patches will continue to develop.

**WEEDS** With the move into cooler weather comes the germination of winter flat weeds, which are incredibly fast and effective at out-competing the lawn.

**SOLUTION** Dig out weeds while still small. If left too long, they'll leave bare patches when they're removed. Avoid lawn herbicides as they contain nasty chemicals.

**DETHATCHING** If your lawn feels thick and spongy, you've got a build-up of old stems and grass blades called thatch. This

makes it harder for water to reach the soil and can also cause fungal outbreaks.

**SOLUTION** Cut the lawn low and, with a hard rake, drag the thatch up out of the lawn. For large areas, hire a dethatching machine and save your muscles. Be prepared for your lawn to look rough afterwards, so do this in the first half of autumn while there's time for the grass to repair before winter. Fertilise to encourage growth.

**FERTILISING** A sad-looking lawn could simply be a hungry lawn. After all, a lot of energy goes into growing those lush blades, which are then regularly cut off and taken away.

**SOLUTION** Apply an organic fertiliser now and water in with eco-seaweed to stimulate activity. Avoid artificial fertilisers as they're usually too high in nitrogen and this imbalance can cause fungal problems.





**WATERING** Beautiful green lawns need regular deep watering, so assess how effective your regimen was over summer. Did you deep-soak your lawn one or two times a week? Did the water soak in or run away?

**SOLUTION** Installing an irrigation system with a timer is the most reliable and efficient way to water the lawn. If you experience persistent run-off problems, the soil will be hydrophobic and needs a soil wetter, such as eco-hydrate.

**SHADE** Most lawns perform best with all-day sunlight. If yours only receives limited direct sunlight, this could explain a weak and patchy lawn.

**SOLUTION** Prune trees and shrubs to increase sunlight. Install a turf variety that better tolerates light shade. In heavier shade, replace the lawn with paving or extended garden beds.

GETTY IMAGES

# Autumn clean-up *tick list*

Here's a quick list of gardening tasks to keep you active this season and have your garden looking its best



## *Dealing with sunburn*

It's now safe to remove any scorched leaves. This will improve the look of plants and allow new growth to come through.



## *Collect autumn leaves*

Rake up falling leaves to prevent lawns and garden beds from being smothered. Add to the compost heap or shred and lay as mulch.



## *Summer stocktake*

Assess which of your plants struggled throughout summer and replace them with plants better suited to your climate.



## *Fill the gaps*

Cooler air temperatures but warm soils means now is a great time to fill any holes in the garden with new plants.



## *Rose care*

In early autumn, cut back finished flower stems by 10 to 20cm, then fertilise. You'll be rewarded with flowers in eight weeks' time.



## *Prune perennials*

Cut back summer- and autumn-blooming perennials when flowering finishes and they start to die down or look ratty.



## *Get propagating*

Increase your plant numbers by taking cuttings and dividing plants. There's still enough warm weather to get them established before winter.



# *Indoor plant rejuvenation*

Indoor plants often endure less than ideal conditions, and now is the perfect time to give them a bit of a boost



## **Cleaning**

Dust doesn't just settle on furniture but also lands on plants making them look dull, blocking light and clogging their pores. Give them a soft wipe with a damp cloth, or better yet take them outside for a gentle but thorough hosing down.

## **Repotting**

Potting mix degrades over time and usually becomes too acidic. Test the pH and if below 6.5, correct by watering in some eco-flo dolomite. If your plant has been in the same mix for more than two years, it's probably compacted and the mix needs changing. Use a premium

organic mix and water in afterwards with eco-seaweed to help plants settle in.

## **Tidy up**

Cast an eye over your plant and remove all dead or dying growth. It might leave the plant looking a little bare, but the extra light and air movement will quickly encourage new growth.

## **Pest patrol**

While tidying your plants, look closely for pests. Sticky leaves and strange bumps mean you've got scale. To control them, spray with eco-oil. White, fluffy stuff in leaf axils and plant crevices will be mealybug and can be controlled with Natrasoap.

## **Fertilising**

Regular applications of stimulants and nutrients will help plants cope with the stress of being indoors. Every fortnight, alternate between a dose of eco-seaweed and an organic liquid fertiliser such as eco-aminogro. Your plants will never look healthier.

## **Plant rotation**

Consider increasing the number of your indoor plants so you can move them about every two to four weeks. We all have places in the house that are better than others and this gives plants an opportunity to enjoy them before going back to a darker spot.





### DID YOU KNOW?

Pups can be tied directly to trees using stockings. They will develop roots and cling to the tree as the stocking rots away.



# Dividing bromeliads

Autumn is the perfect time to divide bromeliads as the extreme heat has gone, but there's enough warmth left to help new plants establish

### Why divide?

After flowering, most bromeliads develop side shoots that become new rosettes, while the original plant declines and never flowers again. Dividing removes the tired old plant and encourages better flowering from the young plants. Plus you'll also earn brownie points with friends if you share them around!

### Getting started

Pull the bromeliad out of the pot so you can see what's going on. Usually it's obvious which is the mother plant and which are the side shoots (called pups). Use secateurs to cut off the pups, making sure there's a good length of woody stem on the base of each. Without that stem, the pup will fail to grow.

Remove any damaged lower leaves from the pup and check for scale. If present, dunk it in a bucket of eco-oil solution as an organic control method. The pups are now ready to plant.

Fill a small pot with orchid potting mix and plant the pup. Only push the woody stem into the mix and stop when the leafy base touches the mix. If planted too deep, the pup may rot. Insert bamboo skewers around the pup to hold it upright and water in with a weak solution of eco-seaweed to encourage new roots. Pups will take about a month to establish themselves.

### Your Garden tip

Wait until pups are at least one third the size of the mother plant to ensure they can establish successfully on their own.



# Get composting

Rather than filling your bins with kitchen scraps and garden clippings, recycle them into a valuable resource: compost

**C**omposting is a way to turn waste organic materials into a fabulous soil-like substance called compost. The finished product provides nutrients, boosts soil's water-holding capacity and does wonders for improving both clay and sandy soils. The more you add to your soil, the better, so it's handy to have an ongoing supply.

## How it works

Don't be put off by the idea – the composting process is pretty simple. Just throw together a bunch of different organic materials, mix them up and wait for microbes to break everything down. OK, so there's a little bit more to it, but that's the basic framework.

## Getting started

**First up, there are two decisions you need to make.**

- 1 What composting microbes will you use: aerobic or anaerobic?
- 2 What structure will you use: a compost heap or a compost bin?

There are pros and cons connected to both options, so here's some extra information to help you decide what method is right for you.

**AEROBIC MICROBES** These guys need oxygen to live and they generate heat during the decomposition process, which can destroy seeds and pathogens. Aerobic composting must be turned regularly to ensure oxygen is present throughout. The reward for this work is that the compost will be rapidly created, within a matter of weeks.



**ANAEROBIC MICROBES** These microbes thrive without oxygen but don't generate heat as they break things down. It doesn't need to be turned, so there's less work involved, but seeds and pathogens won't be killed so be selective about what ingredients are used. This process is much slower, taking several months before being ready.

**COMPOST HEAPS** These are usually large in size (starting from one cubic metre), so

it's easy to generate plenty of heat to deal with seeds and pathogens. They're great for recycling large quantities of material at once, but exposed heaps look messy and may attract rodents if not done well.

**COMPOST BINS** They are self-contained and tidy, which is perfect for smaller gardens, giving no worries with vermin. The small size does mean it's difficult to generate enough heat to destroy seeds and pathogens.





Whatever method you choose, composting will pay huge rewards in your garden.



## Compost ingredients

You can use just about any organic material in your compost and they can be divided into two categories.

**1 Nitrogen-rich ingredients** – often green and moist, such as lawn clippings, fresh leaves, manures and kitchen scraps.

**2 Carbon-rich ingredients** – usually brown and dry, such as branches, old prunings and autumn leaves.

**Note** – Avoid cat and dog faeces as this can contain pathogens harmful to humans.

## Your Garden tip

Speed up the breakdown of bulky, dry ingredients, such as branches, by putting them through a shredder first.

## Assembly

Once you've collected enough materials, it's time to put your compost together. Simply place 10cm-thick layers of the different ingredients over each other, alternating between nitrogen- and carbon-rich materials. Aim for slightly more dry, carbon ingredients and water the mix with eco-seaweed to get things cooking faster!

## Ongoing care

The mix should stay slightly moist for optimum decomposition. If it becomes too dry, then flush through a bucket of seaweed solution. If it becomes slushy, add more dry ingredients and leave the lid off compost bins for a few days.

If using the aerobic method, the mix will need regular turning. With a compost heap, use a large fork to turn and fluff the mix, introducing more oxygen right into the centre. For composting bins, it's handy to get a specialised tool to turn the mix (it looks rather like a giant corkscrew). Turn one or two times a week. The more frequently you turn it, the faster the decomposition.

## When is it ready?

The compost is finished when you can't recognise any of the original ingredients and it looks like rich, dark soil with a sweet, earthy smell.

## What's gone wrong?

**Unpleasant odour** – turn the heap more frequently, add eco-flo lime to 'sweeten' the mix, and reduce moisture content by adding extra dry ingredients.

**Flies** – it's natural for the decomposition process to attract tiny flies. If you have an excessive amount, it usually means the composting process is out of balance. Treat the same way as with smelly compost piles.

**Vermin** – rats and mice can be attracted to the food scraps when they're fresh or if the compost heap is not being turned thoroughly. Try to improve your technique so all of the outside material gets turned into the centre, or switch to a sealed composting bin.



Keep an eye out for caterpillars

# Autumn pests & diseases

Time to watch out for the following common problems:

**Caterpillars and lawn armyworm**

These guys will make short work of seedlings, plants and lawns. At the first sign of an outbreak, spray with eco-neem for effective control.

**Whitefly** If these weren't treated during summer, by now they'll be in plague proportions! Use eco-oil or eco-neem to rescue attacked plants.

**Scale** New-generation scale will have fully developed their scale shell by now and be easy to spot. Sooty mould and the presence of ants are other telltale signs of scale. Spray with eco-oil.

**Snails and slugs** Autumn rains and tender new seedlings will quickly bring out the snails. Use copper tape as a barrier and go on collecting missions after rain or watering. Avoid snail pellets that contain nasty chemicals, and stick to those that are iron-based instead.

**Powdery mildew** This will appear on many plants right now, including zucchinis, pumpkins, strawberries, dahlias and more. Use eco-fungicide to quickly stop its spread.

**Rust and black spot** These common fungal diseases appear now as many plants slow down due to reduced daylight hours and receding warmth, and particularly effect roses and geraniums. Again, spray with eco-fungicide for an organic control.

**Leaf curl** Stone fruit trees that were badly infected during spring should be sprayed at leaf drop with a copper solution to reduce spore count. Remove fallen leaves and spray again at the end of winter at budswell.



# Garden BASICS

## Autumn vegetable planting guide Mar-May

VEGETABLE	COASTAL TROPICS	COASTAL SUBTROPICS	MILD WINTER AREAS	COLD WINTER AREAS
Artichoke	✓ before April	✓ before April	✓ from April	X
Asparagus	✓ from May	✓ from May	X	X
Beans	✓	✓	X	X
Beetroot	✓	✓	✓ before April	X
Broad beans	✓ from May	✓ from May	✓ from April	✓
Broccoli	X	✓	✓	X
Cabbages	✓	✓	✓ before May	✓ before April
Capsicum	✓ before April	✓ before April	X	X
Carrots	✓	✓	✓ before April	X
Celery	✓ before May	✓ before May	X	X
Chinese greens	✓	✓	✓ before May	✓ before April
Corn	✓	X	X	X
Cucumber	✓	✓ before April	X	X
Eggplant	✓ before April	✓ before April	X	X
Golden shallot bulbs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Leeks	✓ from April	✓	✓ before May	X before April
Lettuce	✓	✓	✓	✓
Melons	✓	X	X	X
Okra	✓	X	X	X
Onions	✓	✓	✓	✓ from April
Parsnips	✓	✓	✓ before April	X
Peanuts	✓	X	X	X
Peas	✓	✓	✓	X
Potatoes	✓	✓	X	X
Pumpkin	✓ from April	✓ before April	X	X
Radish	✓	✓	✓	✓ before May
Rhubarb crowns	X	✓ before May	X	X
Rocket	✓ from May	✓ from April	✓ from April	✓ before April
Shallots	✓	✓	✓	✓ before May
Silverbeet	✓	✓	✓ before April	X
Spinach	✓ from May	✓ from April	✓	✓
Swede	X	X	X	✓ before May
Sweet potato	✓	✓ before April	X	X

✓ = suitable to plant X = not suitable to plant



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## DARK AND DRAMATIC

Available in a seemingly endless range of colours and forms, tulips are incredible flowers – and Cuban Night is an exceptional choice among them. Its deeply shaded petals have a delicate frill at their edge, which adds a lovely texture. Available now from Tesselaar Mail Order Nursery. Visit [tesselaar.net.au](http://tesselaar.net.au)



## PRETTY IN PINK

The gorgeous new Floribunda has English style blooms in a swirl of beautiful musk pink with a soft white reverse, and a mild fragrance. The bush is neat and upright, with firm stems that hold clusters of three to five. This is a unique and new modern rose with dark green foliage that's very resistant to disease. Available bare-root in winter 2016 from Treloar Roses. For more information, visit [Treloarroses.com.au](http://Treloarroses.com.au)





# Dogs'

## day out

Your pooch likes to get out and about for some time with his mates as much as you do, so it's time to hit the dog park

**A**s anyone with a dog has probably learnt the hard way, canines don't view gardens the way their human owners do. While we see them as enclaves that nurture, beds of inspiration and a fragrant balm for the soul, our pooches eye them off like a teenager does a skate park. In other words, to be ripped through at top speed while generally making a bit of a goose of yourself with your friends – taking a break only to pee in the far corner. Nice.

The solution lies in dog parks; often multi-use public spaces where your little lass or dude can burn the excess energy that's usually played out on your petunias.

To make the most of these spaces – for both you and your furry friend – you do need to keep these things in mind.

### Entry requirements

First up, you need to think of the DP as a social venue for canines. Almost like a pub and just as at licensed venues, no children are allowed. By which we mean puppies – most of which are not fully immunised until around 16 weeks.

Similarly, you don't want to be admitting any overly aggro types. Neutered dogs tend to be a bit more mellow, and if yours has a tendency to snap when placed in an uncomfortable or overwhelming situation – which dog parks can be at first – you may want to delay your trip until after they've had the snip.

### Pick a park

When selecting a dog park, there are some crucial factors to consider. You want some shaded areas, access to water (otherwise you'll need to bring some) and, most importantly, an enclosed area.

This is because sometimes dogs at parks get into scraps and the more skittish ones might panic, then try to get as far away as possible. It would be awful if your dog went missing, especially around roads.

Another thing that happens is, well you know, what we gardening types call manure... If plastic bags are not provided by the council who maintains the space, be sure to take some along. Every time.

### Rules of the game

To introduce a dog to the park, especially if they are a touch timid, keep them on a lead, walk the space and avoid peak hours. Twenty minutes will be plenty to start off with. Gradually increase this time and the off-leash experience as they become more comfortable.

As much as you and your animal love the idea of a dog park, the reality may be a little different – especially if he or she can be a tad boisterous. Be honest about your dog's character and invest in training, if required. Many dog parks have a code of conduct at the entrance to the park, so familiarise yourself with it because you can be sure there is at least one member of the local council who can't wait to make this community resource animal free.

Because myriad dogs will be in this space over long periods, be sure that your dog's vaccinations are up to date. It's also a good idea to be aware of ticks and fleas that can be picked up there, so stock up on the required medications and check your dog's body afterwards to make sure.

### Attention, please!

Finally – as with so many other areas of life – you might want to look up from your phone. Your little buddy needs to be supervised at all times – for their wellbeing and that of other dogs. And, no, they will not be fine if you leave them there while you dash off to run a few errands.

To find out where your nearest dog park is, visit [doggo.com.au](http://doggo.com.au) ►





## Fur goodness sake!

What's the difference between cat hair and glitter? With enough perseverance you can actually get rid of glitter. But now, the brilliantly named Furminator, \$64.95, from the RSPCA's World For Pets online store, promises to gather 90 per cent of shedding and reduce furballs in the process. There are a number of varieties depending on the size of your cat, and dog versions are also available. [worldforpets.com.au](http://worldforpets.com.au)



## Holy moleý

We all know the internet runs entirely on cat videos, but it seems the paper world is now catching on. One of the hit calendars of 2016 – yes, it's a thing – features a dozen Russian priests posing with their cats. Yes, you read that correctly. The calendar is called "Pop i Kot" and a writer from the local *Komsomolskaya Pravda* tabloid accounted for its success by saying, "The priests are kind and twinkly, and the cats are cute and fluffy."



## Horsing around

When financial services company RaboDirect surveyed 2500 Australians, they found that horses were the most expensive animal to have as a pet – with an average monthly expenditure of more than \$201. Fewer than 10 per cent of horse owners had pet insurance.

## Australia's most pet-friendly cities

According to the 2015 Pet Positives survey that ranked cities by nine criteria – including off-leash areas, strata laws for renters and whether animals can join their owners at cafes – Melbourne and the Gold Coast are the top places in the nation to own an animal.



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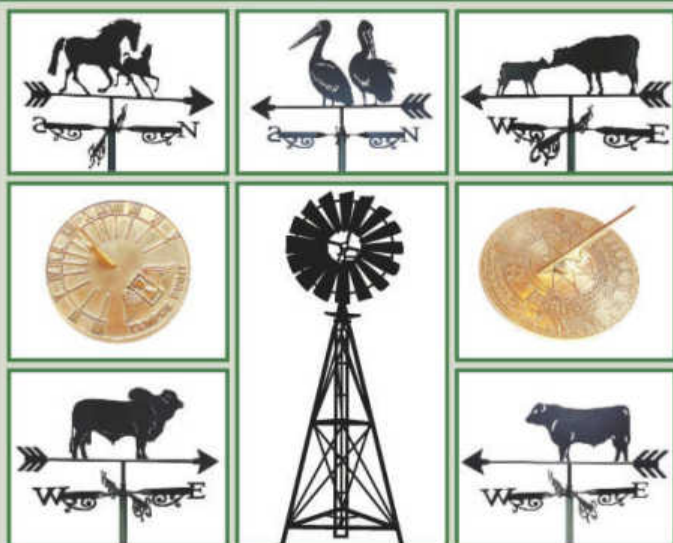
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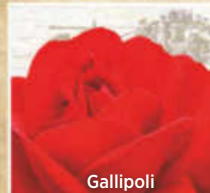


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**T185**



# Vinegar

## “Nature’s secret weapon”

You’ll find vinegar in just about every kitchen in the country – but most of us only ever use it on chips or as a salad dressing. Did you know there are hundreds of other uses for vinegar around the home and as a traditional remedy. If you thought vinegar was just for salad dressing... then you’re in for a big surprise!

“*Vinegar – nature’s secret weapon*” is a new book with over 325 tried and tested uses of vinegar. For example, did you realise that you can use vinegar to:

- ▶ Polish the chrome on your car
- ▶ Soothe tired and aching feet
- ▶ Clean work surfaces, mirrors and glass
- ▶ Repair scratches in wood
- ▶ Relieve headaches
- ▶ Whiten whites, brighten colours and fade sweat stains
- ▶ Lift painful corns and calluses
- ▶ Clear embarrassing dandruff
- ▶ Ease the pain of insect bites
- ▶ Help treat burns
- ▶ Help fade age spots
- ▶ Prevent infections
- ▶ Ease nausea and stomach upset
- ▶ Relieve coughs and tickly throats
- ▶ Cure hiccups – fast
- ▶ Relieve a sore throat
- ▶ Guard against food poisoning
- ▶ Disinfect almost anything – it’s used in many hospitals
- ▶ Lift stains on carpets
- ▶ Remove ink stains
- ▶ Soothe painful sunburn
- ▶ Clean brass, copper and pewter
- ▶ Banish unpleasant odours

- ▶ Dissolve chewing gum
- ▶ And much, much, more.

Over 325 different uses in total. But that’s not all. Vinegar also has two very powerful natural allies – Honey and Garlic.

### Honey and Garlic too!

As a special bonus and for a limited time only, we have included two completely free sections to the Vinegar book – so, not only do you get a Vinegar book, but you also get a Honey book and Garlic book too – that’s three of nature’s secret weapons all for just \$34.95.

You’ll learn simple, yet effective home remedies using honey and garlic – alone or mixed with vinegar and at a fraction of what you’d pay for commercially prepared products.

Here are some of the amazing health secrets you’ll discover within the special honey and garlic BONUS sections of “*Vinegar, Honey & Garlic – nature’s secret weapons*”:

- ▶ Learn to prepare this easy poultice for painful joints
- ▶ A simple drink to ease muscle pain fast!
- ▶ Prevent burns from scarring with this easy to prepare mixture
- ▶ This tasty recipe will help keep your cholesterol at a healthy level
- ▶ Heal that cold sore fast



- ▶ A morning treat that could ease the discomfort of asthma
- ▶ This delicious tea could add sparkle to your sex life
- ▶ Need to lose weight? Here’s a tasty brew that will help
- ▶ Stop toothache quickly with this natural pain relieving tip
- ▶ This Russian folk remedy for colds works like a charm
- ▶ Clear spots and blemishes fast
- ▶ Ease gas and indigestion fast
- ▶ Learn how to combat the flu
- ▶ Plus much more.

These special bonus sections on Honey & Garlic are only available for a limited time, so to avoid disappointment, please send your order now – and you’ll be getting three for the price of one.

### TO ORDER

■ *Vinegar, Honey & Garlic – nature’s secret weapons*, – **\$34.95**. See coupon below.

Order online at: [www.cmshop.today/CVG44](http://www.cmshop.today/CVG44)



Lines Open 7 Days:  
9.00am – 6.00pm



**CALL NOW**

**1800 83 84 89**

Ask for Dept  
CVG44

- ☐ I am ordering within 7 days and claim my Special Bonus.
- ☐ One copy of “*Vinegar Honey and Garlic – nature’s secret weapons*” for just \$34.95 + \$9.95 p&p
- ☐ **SAVE \$14.95** – Two copies for \$64.90 + \$9.95 p&p
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## Lifestyle Magic carpet

Thousands of tourists flock to the temple every year to see the amazingly colourful display.

# Hello yellow

Autumn is all about enjoying the stunning seasonal colours. But nothing we've grown in our gardens can match this Chinese beauty for its simply amazing brilliance

**T**here's autumn colour, and then there's autumn colour! Those lucky monks at the Gu Guanyin Buddhist Temple in the Zhongnan Mountains in the Chinese city of Xi'an are left in no doubt every year as to when autumn begins. It's all thanks to this towering ginkgo tree that showers its golden leaves over the temple grounds to herald the changing seasons. Ginkgos are often referred to as 'living fossils' because evidence of

them has been found dating back 270 million years – predating flowering plants. Although this particular specimen is not nearly that old, it is said to have been planted almost 1400 years ago by Emperor Li Shimin during the Tang Dynasty (618-907AD). The tree is now a major tourist attraction and has been given protected status by the Chinese government. Well deserved, we say. Bags not on raking duty, though. ■



A vibrant yellow carpet appears beneath the tree every autumn.

AUSTRALSCOPE



# Lose Weight Fast

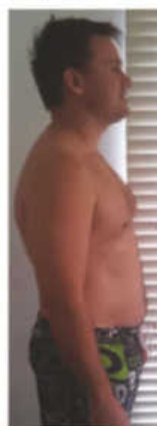
- Zero Exercise • Zero Shakes • Zero Starvation
- Zero Prescription Medication

Do you need to lose weight?  
Have you tried many diets without success?  
Have you lost weight and put it all back on?  
If you have answered yes to any of the above questions, 123Diet can help you.

## 2 More Success Stories



127kg to 76kg  
Nicole lost 51kgs



93kg to 81kg  
Andrew Lost 12kgs



Australian  
Made

"For 11 years I had been trying to lose weight with no success. I felt uncomfortable all the time. I have always been a fairly healthy eater, but no matter what exercise I did, or what I ate, I could not lose weight. I have an Under-active Thyroid and Polycystic ovaries so all odds seemed against me. I tried 123Diet, and this time I saw results immediately. This kept me motivated to keep going. I was not hungry and got to eat real food. I felt great and 42 days later I looked great. I lost 21kgs in 42 days and I am healthier than I have ever been. My entire family and many of my friends have all had great results with 123Diet. Its now been 3 years since I lost my weight and I have maintained it all this time. 123Diet has changed my life. If any one wants to lose weight this is the way."

Emma Qld

Emma lost  
**21kgs**  
in 42 days



78 KG



57 KG

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includes 42 day diet  
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Phone: 1300 987 193 or 0478 362 230

Mail: Chqs and money orders fill out coupon provided

Australian Supplements: PO Box 609, Oxenford Qld, 4210

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